

AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE
Song of Solomon:
called CANTICLES.

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Together with
Profitable OBSERVATIONS,
collected out of the same.

¶ Perused and published by WILLIAM
GOUGE, Preacher of Gods Word in
Black-Friers, London.

Acts 8. 13. *How should I vnderstand, except some man should
guide mee?*



LONDON,
Printed by IOHN BEALE dwelling in *Alders-*
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1615.

POSITION

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TO THE AVTHOR OF THIS WORK

*The Publisher thereof wisheth Grace in this world,
and Glory in the world to come.*

RIGHT WORSHIPEVLL,



I pleased you as a testimonie of your loue, to bestow these your labours on me written with your owne hand: they being mine by a free donation on your part, I think I haue power to doe with them what I will. VVherefore I haue been bold to publish them, knowing that they are wel worth the publishing, and that thorough Gods blessing they may bring much spirituall comfort, and profit to Gods Church. Long continued custome requireth that they should haue a Patron. What better Patron can they haue then the true proper parent? who for eminencie of place can adde great countenance vnto them, and for excellencie in learning can maintain them. For mine owne part I acknowledge my selfe many waies much indebted vnto your W^{orship}. In testimony of my duty and thankfulnessse, I returne that publicly vnto you, which priuaty you were pleased to bestow on mee.

Your worps. to be commanded in the Lord,

Black-Friers London,
25. April 1615.

WILLIAM GOUGE.



To the Christian Reader.



Great priuiledge it is , that the
Lord hath committed vnto vs his Rom. 3: 1. 2
diuine Oracles : but vnto those,
to whom the tongue wherein they
were written is strange and vn-

knowne, or the mysteries themselves obscure and
hard to be vnderstood, what is the benefit of that
fauour, if the language be not interpreted, and the
mysteries opened ? shall not these Oracles be as the Read 1/a. 29:
words of a sealed booke ? It is needfull that as 11, 17.
the letter of the Scripture bee interpreted, so the
mystery thereof vnfolded. Euery booke of holie
writ requireth a faithfull and learned interpre-
ter : but some more then other : among and aboue
those some, this Song of Solomon : and that in
regard of the excellency, and of the difficultie there-
of. Two things commend the excellency of it :
First, the Author ; Secondly, the matter. The
principall Author is the same that by inspirati-

To the Christian Reader.

a. Tim. 3. 16 on gaue the whole Scripture : the immediate
 1. King. 4. 19. Pen-man of it was a King, the most wise and lear-
 30, &c. ned King that euer was. The matter is concer-
 * Reade this ning^b a blessed, & sweet coniur.ction between
 Exposition Christ & his Church, one of the most comforta-
 Chap. 1. Ver. 1. ble mysteries of our Christian faith. Two things
 also argue the difficultie of it. 1. The very phrase
 and stile, which being poetickall is the more obscure.
 2. The manie Rhetoricall allegories, and hyper-
 bolicall metaphors which are hard to be vnder-
 stood and rightly applied. The title of this Booke
 pointeth out all these points. 1 Plainely it is sayd
 to be Solomons. 2 A Song is a kinde of Poe-
 sic, and Poesies are commonly adorned with alle-
 gories and figures. 3. For the^d excellency of it, it
 is termed a Song of Songs. i. a Song that sur-
 passeth all other songs. ^e The Iewes (to whom the
 Oracles of God were first committed) ter-
 med all the bookes of the Scripture holy : but
 this the holy of holies : whereby they intimated
 the excellencie of it. ^f They permitted none to read
 it alone till he were thirty yeere olde : whereby they
 implied the difficultie of it. Is it so difficult ? sure-
 ly it needeth a learned interpreter. Is it so ex-
 cellent ?

^c A Song of
Songs which is
Solomons.

^d Bern. pro
sui excellentia
hoc carmen
merito Canti-
ca canticorum
appellatur si-
cut is quoque
cui canitur
Rex Regum.

^e In Midr.
Rom. 3. 2

^f Hier. in pro-
p. in Ezech.
nisi quis apud
eos etatem
sacerdotalis
ministrum i.
trigesimum
annum imple-
uerit, Canticum
canticorum
legere non
permititur.

To the Christian Reader.

cellent? Surely it deserueth the best paines of a faithfull interpreter. Heerein therefore (good Reader) thou art much beholding to the learned author of this booke, who hath taken so good pains in expounding this rare Song. Such is the Author, such the worke, that neither father nor child need to bee ashamed of one another. The Author is a man of great place and note in the Commonwealth; his humility will not suffer him to haue his name made known. Though by profession he be not a Diuine, yet in knowledge of those learned tongues wherein the Scriptures were written, and in understanding of the mysteries contained in them, he is a very deep & profound Diuine. The many learned treatises which he hath made, some in Hebrew, other in English; some heretofore published, other still lying by him, are euidences of more then I haue sayd. As for this present Treatise, I obserue sixe worthie points in it to commend it vnto thee.

1. A true interpretation of the Hebrew text. 2. A sound exposition of the sense and meaning of the words. 3. A fit application of the Metaphors, and allegories. 4. A fruitfull collection of doctrines, and obseruations. 5. Perspicuitie. 6. Breuitie.

These

To the Christian Reader.

Hor. - breui's
esse laboro
Obscurus f.o.

These two last seldome meet together; for some, labouring to be briefe, are obscure; other, labouring to be perspicuous, are tedious: when they meete together they are admirable helpes to understanding, memory, affection and all. Thus I haue shewed thee (Christian Reader) that this Song of Songs is worthie to bee expounded; yea that necessarie it is, it should bee expounded: that the Author of this worke is well able to performe so weightie a worke; and that he hath taken good paines in performing it. Do thou vse his paines for thine owne good. If thou aske me why I meddle so farre wth it, as to publish it, I answer, For thy good; had it not been for me, thou haddest not seene it: for it should seem that the Author long since wrot it, and let it lie in his studie, not minding to publish it, I being of late with him about other businesse, espied it: and reading it desired him to publish it: he vnterlie denied me. I then intreated him to bestowe it on me; he gaue it me. Thus it was mine. But should I keepe such a pearle of so good vse to all that will vse it, close and secret to my selfe? Then might I iustly be censured, as enuious of thy good. I enuie it not: I would I could doe thee more good; thou

The Epistle to the Reader.

thou shouldest be iure to pertake thereof. But that,
while I seeke to auoide the blame of Enuie, I may
not seeme ambitious, know that in this whole worke
there is nothing of mine, but all is the Authors own.
Hee hath also by him, a like Exposition of the
Prophecie of Holoer, and other treatises: I hope to
preuaile with him for the publishing of them, when
he shall see the frust of these his labours. The re-
compence which I desire is, that thou helpe both the
Author of this booke, and the Publisher thereof
with thy prayers to God.

Thine in the Lord,

WILLIAM GOUGE.

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AN ADVERTISMENT *to the Reader.*



Olomons Song is twice runne o-
uer in this booke : first, the
sense is deliuered , then ob-
seruations collected from
thence.

In expounding the Text, the Author hath
held himselfe close to the *Hebrew*.

In diuiding the Chapters hee hath had
more respect to the dependance of matter,
then to common custome, for which he hath
the example of learned men.

In the latter part of this booke hee hath
not set downe the whole entire Text, but on-
ly so much as serued to shew whence the ob-
seruations were gathered ; because they were
at large set downe in the former part : If in
reading the *Observations* thou be desirous to
see

see the whole Text, turne to the same place
in the *Exposition*.

Reade the severall sections both of the
Exposition and of the *Observations*, so as if
they were ioined together without any in-
terruption of the Text: for sometimes the
beginning of one Section dependeth vpon
the latter end of another.

There is one generall point omitted tho-
roughout the whole booke viz. the setting
downe of such words, as were needfull to be
added in the Text for sense sake and propri-
ety of our tongue, in a differing letter; it can-
not now be amended. I pray thee therefore
more diligently marko them: blame not the
Author; who, I am sure, would haue seene
this and other faults redressed, if he had re-
uised the sheetes before they had past the
presse.

Such faults as may seeme to hinder the
sense, are in the next following page set
downe.

Errata.

PAge 5 line 27 read large p. 7 l. 21 these paths, p. 9. Also friends
p. 17 l. 18. they could, p. 20 l. 13 be remoueth, p. 29 l. 23
in y ip, p. 33 l. 15 is my, p. 35 l. a owne hurt, p. 40 l. 5 what
shoul. you ell him? p. 55 l. 14 louely, Chap. 18. verse 2. l. 1.
burdenn, p. 80 l. 29 is apt.



AN
EXPOSITION
of the *Song of Solomon*, called
CANTICLES.

CHAP. I.

VERS. I *A Song of songs, which is Solomons.*



He Bookes of *Solomon*
the *Iewes* compare not
vnfitly to the Temple
which he built Where-
of this song of songs, or
most excellent song re-
sembleth the holy of
holies or the most holy
place: Being a declarati-
on of the blessed and sweet coniunction betweene
Christ and his Church, and of the contract, and
B cipation.

espousels made betweene them, whilst the Church is now militant vpon earth. All which time is as it were a bidding of the banes vntill by his second comming from heauen our spirituall marriage with him shall be solemnized and made vp.

The Author *Solomon*, peaceable, for so his name doth signifie, a figure of Christ the Prince of peace, and the builder both of that earthly Sanctuarie, and of this heavenly frame, was, no doubt, whatsoeuer otherwise his fals might be, an elect vessell of God. 1. Because all the Prophets (of which number he was one) are in the kingdome of heauen *Luke* 13. 28. for howsoeuer it pleased God sometimes to speake by the wicked as hee did by *Balaam*, and to wring out of their mouthe contrary to their heart, that which might serue for the glory of his name: yet he neuer vled the seruice of any but vessels of election, to be the penmen of his Spirit. So the Apostle *2. Pet.* 1. 19. 20. telleth vs, that those which by diuine inspiration wrote the propheticall Scriptures, were all of them *holy men of God*. 2. The holy Ghost doth alwaies speake well of *Solomon* after his death, and maketh in all places an honourable mention of his name, which it neuer doth of the reprobate. 3. His waies are commended, and *Rehoboam* hath his worthy praise for walking in them *2. Chron.* 11. 17. 4. God, whose counsels are constant, loued him and cleped his name *Iedidah*, beloued of the Lord. *2. Sam.* 12. 24. 25. 5. He himselfe is said againe to haue loued God: *1. Kings*

3. 5. Which being true and vnfeined (otherwise the Holy Ghost would neuer haue spoken of it) was impossible to be lost. And this very booke if it were written before his fall is an vndoubted argument how sincere, earnest, and vehement his loue was, and what a feeling hee had of the loue of Christ. If after his fall, it argueth then most certainly a sincere, and true repentance. 6. And lastly the booke of *Ecclesiastes* doth manifestly euince it, written when hee was olde, after hee had seene so much and had so long experience of his owne vanities and corruptions. The title whereof, *A^(s) soule* an humble, and grieued soule *reconciled to the Church*, from whence hee was before cast out for his offences: or, *A soule speaking*, and making confession, *in the Church*, sheweth his repentance.

2. 1. 1. Ko. heleth As if you would say vnderstanding soule, or some such substance.

The manner of writing is that which we call actiue, or representatiue, that is wherein Persons onely are brought in speaking, the Author himselfe saying nothing: and the persons here are Christ, the Church, and sometimes, but very rarely, the friends of them both: In all which the Church, burning with a desire of Christ longeth, and is impatient till shee be ioined vnto him. For hether tend all her passions, exclamations, testifications of her loue, commendations of her spoule. Christ againe by kinde gentle and louing speeches comforteth and cheereth vp the Church with certaine hope of that happie and blessed time: for hether tend all his commendations of her present, and promise of future graces, the accepting of her vnfeined repen-

tance, and the assurance of purging, pruning, and making her more holy and fit for him. Till thee be taken vp vnto him without spot or wrinkle.

The Booke hath two parts. Whereof the first comprehendeth all that time that Christ and shee are friends, before any falling out, in the foure first Chapters. The Churh longing to bee ioined to Christ. *Chapt. 1.* Acknowledging the benefits and comforts of life, pleasure and all good things which he bestoweth vpon her. *Chapt. 2.* And lastly desiring to see Christ in his heavenly glory. *Chapt. 3.* Whom Christ most sweetly comforteth. *Chapt. 4.* The second part, in the foure last chapters, is a falling out of these two louers thorough the Churches fault and vnkindnesse to him. But this falling out is a reuuing of their loue. In her by repentance *Chapt. 5.* in him by a gracious accepting of her into his fauour againe, as deere as euer shee was before. *Chapt. 6.* Whence ariseth all thankfulnessse from the Church and promise to amend *Chapt. 7. vers 1. 2. 3. 4.* with a noble demonstration of her zeale vnto him; testified by her longing, first for his owne comming in the flesh. *Chapt. 7. vers 5. to the end of the Chapter.* Secondly for the drawing of others that as yet were strangers and aliens from the common wealth of *Israell* to the fellowship and participation of Christ, and for the whole *Israell* of God (Iewes and Gentiles) to be knit and ioined together in one holy society. *Chapt. 8.* And so this second part containeth three most excellent prophesies. One of the words incarnation, an other of the calling of the Gentils,

Gentiles, the third of the conuersion of the Iewes and their access in the last daies vnto the Church of Christ. But let vs now heare themselues speake, and with their owne words to vtter their owne affections.

CHURCH:

VERS. 2. *O let him kisse mee with the kisses of his mouth, for thy Loues are excellent better then wine.*

The Church (whose heart the Spirit of Christ had before knit vnto him) beginneth to wooe her loue: and crying out in a passion, desireth his embracings: That he would be present with her, ioinc himselfe vnto her, and remaine hers for euer. This vehement desire, this ardency of affection she sheweth to be most iust & reasonable, and fortieth the equity, the honesty, the necessity, the fruite, and commodity thereof, diuersly and many waies. First the excellency of this loue is wonderfull, aboue all the pleasures and delights of the world: especially if it come not single but accompanied with a largesse and a bounty from him, that it may be called *Loues* in the plurall. What wine so pleasant to the taste?

VERS. 3. *Because of the smell of thy good ointments thy name is as an ointment poured forth. Therefore the Virgins loue thee.*

(What

What ointment so fragrant to the smell? Was that which shed vpon *Aarons* head, trickled downe his beard, and wet the hemmes of his garment? or the costly ointment, that *Alabaster* boxe of pure *Nard*, the *Spickenard* which shee powred vpon our Saviour *Christ*, that filled all the house with the sweetnesse of the smell? Take which you will, and the best ointments els, they are not worthy to be named, when thine ointments, the ioy of gladnesse wherewith *God* hath annointed thee aboue thy fellowes, and which thou powrest forth to the comfort of the world, & the refreshing of thy *Saints* that haue any sence, and spirituall smell, are talked of. I speake not of my loue as present with me when I enioy his sweet selte, and haue him in mine armes. No. *Eye* hath neuer seen, *care* hath neuer heard, heart cannot conceiue the sweetnes of those delights. But I speake of the verie remembrance of him, absent and away. Thwite me not here with any carnall loue, or loue to steale my heart from *God*; farre be that from my thoughts: I meane nothing but that which is holy, chaste, pure, maidenly, and virgin-like, free as well from bodily pollution, and vncleannesse; as from spirituall fornication against my spoule.

VER 5, 4. Draw me, after thee will we runne. Let the King bring mee into his priue chambers. We will reioice and be glad in thee. We will record thy loues better then wine. They shall

shall record them who in all rightnes do loue thee

They that will follow vaine vanities and forsake their owne mercy, let them doe it. But I will cleaue to thee. This comming, and cleauing vnto Christ, is I confesse a diuine worke, the worke of God himself, & steps beyond the reach of man, which no humane foote can tread, no wit can climbe vnto or comprehend, vnlesse it be framed and fashioned from aboue. A worke which of all others vvee are most vntoward to, of such difficulty that wee must be drawen, and haled, and violently pulled out of our selues, before wee can once settle about it, ha- uing neither power, nor so much as will vnto it; for what finde I in my selfe to egge, and prouoke me thereunto? Whatsoeuer I haue within me, or without me, from the top vnto the toe, from the head vnto the heeles, is an vtter enemy, and doth oppose and set it selfe against it; yet I desire thorough the working of his holy spirit (for euen the desire and first thought doth come from him,) not onely to walke in the paches, (which notwithstanding O happy men that so doe, and how few there bee that find the same) but to runne in them with all my might and maine, with faith, hope, patience, and obedience to follo w thee: O let my feete be shod and made nimble for to doe it. But who (thinke you?) is the person whom thus I loue, and am so enamoured with? Verely the King himselfe our Soueraigne Lord, CHRIST, the God of glory, worthy to be loued of all, able to draw all

vnto his loue, and to make all the gates, and doores of our heart to be set open to him. What may be the place whether we runne so fast, and would so faine hie our selues vnto? It is his owne priuie chambers, his Church, and house heere, and after this his heavenly tabernacles, where better it is to be one hower then in the Palaces of all other Kings a thousand yeeres beside. The fruites and effects that come from it, are admirable, and diuine: ioy in the Holy Ghost, spirituall mirth and gladnesse. For the hauing whereof where, or who is he (shew me the man, if he be a man and not a very beast) that would not bid al the solity of the world adew. It is a ioy cannot well bee hidden: it will shew it selfe and fill our mouthes with the praises of his name, with Psalmes, hymnes, and spirituall songs, all too little, too too little for him. Neither will I (my selfe alone) take pleasure in this duty, I and mine, all my friends and followers, whosoeuer they be that loue thee, will vncessantly performe the same: you prophane get you farre away. The praises of God beleeue me not your mouthes. These pretious Iewels, such pearles are not for swines noures. So holy a worke belongeth to holy men: It is for them whose hearts are cleane, pure, sanctified, which walke in all integrity and in the righteousness of their waies. These our God doth call; their tongues he fines and files, to be the trumpeters of his glory:

Thus, and by these arguments (twelue in number) the Church setteth forth, amplifieth, and

and enlaigeth the lumine of her most holy desires.

VERSE 5 *I am black, but comly, O daughters of Ierusalem: Like to the Kedarenes that dwell in tents: but I am also like to those that dwell in the curtaines of Solomon.*

Now because it is the property of true loue to be desirous that others also may haue a liking of the thing beloued, shee remoueth the lets and hindrances that may keepe her friend and fellows (in Gods election members of the Church) from coming vnto CHRIST, confessing there is nothing outwardly in her to bee seene that can giue content or make her bee liked, but inwardly, in the hidden man shee is amiable and full of beauty: for this daughter of the King is all glorious within, foule in her selfe and black, euen cole black, as black as any black-more, or if any thing bee more black then it, through sinne, both originall and actuell, that maketh her to com short of the glory of God, and to be subiect to death and condemnation: but through CHRIST, and the righteousnesse shee hath in him, she is goodly and glorious as *Solomons* courtly traine.

VERS. 6. *Looke not vpon mee because I am blackish, because the Sunne hath cast his beames vpon me, because the sonnes of my mother incensed against me, haue made mee a keeper*
C of

*of other vine-yards: mine owne vine-yard
I haue not kept.*

Three things indeed there bee which lay her open, though washed, though iustified, though sanctified through CHRIST, to ignomie and reproach. All which notwithstanding shee is not to be despised, since none of them, nor they all are able to obscure the brightnes of Gods glory in her, first the remnants of sinne that still cleaue vnto her, and are so many foule spots in her faire face: making her blackish, though not cole black. Secondly afflictions, as it were the schorching of the Sun. Lastly her infirmitie, that thorough the peeuishnesse of some which beare the face of bretheren, not able to endure wholsome doctrine, and the sweete yoke of IESVS CHRISTs, but making stirres and discords in the Church, and teaching instead of Christs lores their owne fantasies, and pleasures, shee hath in weaknesse been driven to yeeld in many things contrary to the duty and place which God hath let her in.

VERS. 7. *Shewe mee O thou whom my soule loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest flock to lie downe at noone: for why should I bee as one that pitcheth her tents by the flocks of thy companions.*

Wherefore she saith she will goe to the Arch-bishoppe, and chiefe sheppard of her soule, of him
to

to learne how to carry her selfe in the Church, which is the house of the liuing God, to be ordered by those Lawes onely that hee himselfe the most wise house-holder hath prescribed. Heereupon she turneth her speech to Christ, telling him, hee onely is her delight. All his ordinances she accounteth right in all things, and that shee hateth euery lying path. And therefore prayeth him to teach her where hee feedeth with his Word and Sacraments, where at noone day hee maketh his sheepe to rest: for both feeding and resting, wholly and in all things her desire is to be at his direction. And euen then when others repast themselves and take their meales, shee can not be in quiet vnlesse shee bee with him. That so ranging her selfe among his other sheepe she may bee kept from hauing any thing to doe with strange shepherds, that in name participate with CHRIST, but in truth are none of his.

CHRIST.

VERS. 8. *If thou know not O thou fairest among women, get thee out from going in the steppes of yonder flock, and feed thy kiddes aboue the tabernacles of those shepherds.*

To this Christ maketh answer; first satisfying her demaund in that wherein she was not fully before enformed. Bidding her by any meanes to take heed of the worldly prophane and hereticall teachers, and such as are corrupted by them, that

shee tread not in their steps, but to feede her little ones, the faithful flocke, with the foode of heauenly doctrine in all sincerity and truth, lifting them vp, out, and from aboute the world.

VERS. 9. *Vnto the troope of horses in the chariots of Pharaoh doe I liken thee, my fellow friend.*

By this occasion they fall to congratulate one vnto an other, the good things that are in them: CHRIST hee praiseth his owne gifts bestowed vpon the Church, in regard of the dignity of her person, by his word affirming, and by the power of his spirit making her like to the horse of *Pharaohs* Chariot, braue, stately, and couragious, excellent for all good seruices.

VERS. 10. *Thy cheekes are comlie, as with rewes of small stones: thy neck as with collars.*

And in regard of the ornaments of the spirit, wherby her cheekes and neck, the principall seates of beauty, are set forth with rewes of precious stones, gemmes, collars, and gorgious things, as horses of those countries were wont to be.

VERS. 11. *Borders of Gold wee will make vnto thee, with specks of neate silver.*

And not content therewith promiseth that the Father Sonne and the holy Ghost, the blessed and glo-

glorious Trinity, will further bewtifie, and let her out with all rich graces and ornaments of the spirit, with a continuall growth of sanctification, as it were pure gold, bewtified with the silver specks of a new encrease of holinesse, being made more and more glorious by the reflection of his glory.

CHURCH.

VERS. 12. *Whilest the King is in his circute, my Spicknard doth give forth his smell.*

The Church, resoundeth the praises of her CHRIST, for the sweet and fragrant odours that from him come downe vpon her by his Word, and the power of his spirit, those holy things that make her so sweete her selfe, and to spreade her sweetnesse farre and neere to other: And that euen now whilest this Lord and King sitteth in the round globe of the highest and most glorious heauens, absent in the flesh; how much more when CHRIST which is her life, shall appeare and reueale himselfe in glory?

VERS. 13. *My beloued is as a bundle of mirrh vnto me that lodgeth betweene my breasts.*

The cause of all is, Christs dwelling in her heart by faith, which maketh her both gracious, and sweete as a nosegay of mirrh in a weomans bosome,

VERS. 14. *My well-beloued is vnto mee as a cluster of Cypres in the vine-yards of Hengedie.*

And as a cluster of Cypres full of berries within his white flower, when the same is planted in fruitfull gardens, such as Hengedie was.

CHRIST.

VERS. 15. *Behold thou art faire my fellow friend, behold thou art faire, thine eyes are doues eyes.*

This mutuall gratulation Christ shutteth vp with exclamations, setting forth her bewty, the bewty she hath in him without spot, and glorious, also her charity and doue-like simplicity, that will not cast one eie vpon any superstitions

CHVRCH

VERS. 16. *Behold thou art faire my well-beloued: also delectable: also our bed is greene.*

The Church shutteth vp with commendations of the bewty and amiablenesse of her loue, and the fruitfulnessse of their bed, begetting many children vnto God.

* *Armer*, as the Hebrew word is, which *Pilme* also doth retain in the 12 booke of his naturall history Chap. 17 signifieth rare, pleasant and speciall woods.

CHRIST and CHVRCH both.

VERS. 17. *The beames of our houses are of Cedars, our walkes of brute trees.*

They both conclude with commendations of the

the preciousnesse of their houses, and of the walkes wherein they visite one another, that is of Christs habitation in her by the communion and fellowshippe of the spirit.

CHAP. I I.

CHRIST.

VERS. 1. *I am the rose of *Sharon, the Lillie of the valleys.*

**Sharon was a place of low pasture grounds, between Bashan & mount Libanon, as appeareth 1 Chron. 1. 16 & 27. 29. So that by a rose of Sharon, hee meaneth a rose growing in a fruitful and sunny place, which is allwaies of sweetest savour.*



He Church and her spouse not satisfied with their former praises, and the mutuall commending one of another, fall afresh vnto it. Hee commendeth his owne sweete vertue, which hee hath not for himselfe alone, but by his spirit doth communicate to his Church.

VERS. 2. *As a Lillie among thornes, so is my fellowe friend among the daughters.*

Whereby the same as farre excelleth all other companies and assemblies through the righteousness and glory she receiueth from him, as the Lillie doth the thornes: for all are no better then thornes take them as they are, but specially if they be compared with her.

VERS.

CHURCH.

VERS. 3. *As an apple-tree among the trees of the forest, so is my wel-beloved among the Sonnes: under his shadow I desire that I may sit: for sweet is his fruit unto my pallet.*

The Church againe praiseth him for his fruitfulness, and the sweetnesse both of his shade and fruits. Such and so great, as she desireth not onely to rest vnder the shadowe of his grace and righteousness, thereby to be kept from the scorching heat of the wrath of God, the curse of the Lawe, death, and condemnation, being reconciled by him to his Father: but to taste of the dainty fruits, the fullnesse of ioyes that are at his right hand.

VERS. 4. *He brought me into the banquetting house, and his banner ouer me was loue.*

Here is the great desire & longing expre'st, which she hath for Christ, enlarged narration-wise, by two most sweete and notable fruits that proceed from him vnto his Church. First life, safety and deliverance from all euill: then pleasure, comfort, ioy, peace of conscience, and the fruition of all good. The former she setteth forth, first by the efficient cause, his onely loue shed in her heart by the holy Ghost: wherby he kept her as fast vnto himselfe, as Soldiers are kept about the colours of their Generall, that nothing could pul her from him. Secondly by the place wher this was done, the banquetting house

house of the congregation of his Saints, where all dainties and junketing dishes, all pleasures and delights were to be found in him.

VERS. 5. *Stay mee with these flagons, hold me vp with these apples, for I am sick of loue.*

Thirdly, by her fainting for the desire of Christ. So sick shee was with spirituall loue. Fourthly, by her great desire, expressed by turning her speech to his seruants that stood round about the Table, the ministers of the Word to stay and hold her vp, and to keep life within her, by an holy vse of the Word and Sacraments, which are as refreshing apples, and as bottles of wine, out of the which wee suck the sweete promises of the Gospell.

VERS. 6. *His left hand is vnder my head, and his right hand doth embrace mee.*

Fifthly, by Christs doing a great deal more then we should require: Euen himselfe as a kinde husband will doe vnto his wife, taking her in both his armes, and so falling with her into a sweet rest and slumber from the cares of this present world.

VERS. 7. *I adiure ye yee daughters of Ierusalem, tarrie without with the roes, or with the bindes of the field. Stirre not vp nor waken this loue untill he please.*

Sixthly, by adiuring all Christians to abide in
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their place and standing, that is to say in some honest and lawfull vocation, as *Rachell* that looked to her fathers heards, and not eyther thorough idlenesse, or disorderly walking and following after sinfull pleasures to grieve the spirit, and to grieve Christ cause, when they may have and hold him, to disioint himself from them. And so she liues and breaths in him thorough that sweet and happy coniunction shee hath with her head.

VERS. 8. *It is the voice of my well-beloued. Behold this same, hee commeth lepping upon these mountaines, skipping upon these hils.*

But that is not all. She thus resting in quiet sleep, and hee going into the countrey to the pleasant fields to prepare and set things in a readines, returning againe heapeth vpon her fauours and pleasures that cannot be expressed, which shee with a ioyfull heart setleth her selfe to entertaine. First, hee speaketh vnto her, shee heareth his comfortable voice. Secondly he commeth, shee seeth him comming a farre off. Thirdly, hee is present and at hand, no hilles, nor hillocks, no offences, great or small, haynous sinnes or meaner imperfections are able to stay his comming.

VERS. 9. *My well-beloued is like a roe, or a young Hart. Behold this same, he standeth behind our wall, looking forth of the windows, (beu-*

*shewing himselfe cheerefully thorough the
grates.*

Hereupon she crieth out for ioy, compareth him with the hinds & yong roes for his swiftnes, with goodly flourishing trees for his sweetnesse, and the pleasure of his countenance. Onely this is her griefe, that hee looketh but as it were through the grates, standeth behinde the walls, and doth not as she would, communicate his presence with her.

VERS. 10. *My well-beloued spake and saide vnto me,
Arise my fellow friend, my faire one, and
come thy way.*

Then thus prepared to heare and to receiue him, he speaketh to her heart: and powring forth a golden shower of kinde and gracious words, with siluer streames of eloquence (manifesting his affection) inuiteth her to the fruition of those good and excellent things which by his Word and spirit hee is ready to bestow vpon her.

VERS. 11. *For behold the winter is past, the raine is
ouer, it is gone.*

Drawing arguments from her present state and condition compared with her former misery that was in the time of her ignorance, whilst she lay dead in sinne and trespasses, and was a stranger from the life of God: al which time was as the winter season,

foule and tempestuous, full of stormes, of horror of minde, terror of conscience, feare of death and desperation.

VERS. 12. *The flowers appeare in the earth, the time of the chirping of birds is come, and the voice of the Turtle is heard in our land.*

VERS. 13. *The Figge-tree hath put forth her greene figes, and the vines with the tender grape giue forth a smell. Arise my fellow friend, my faire one, and come thy way.*

But this now com in the place of it is as the pleasant spring, all greene, fresh, and flourishing. Such are the pleasures that the enioying of Christ doth bring. That done here moueth two maine objections that euenmore trouble the Saints of God, and hold them as it were amazed.

VERS. 14. *My dove that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, in the fleety denne; shewe mee thy countenance, make mee to heare thy voice: for thy voice is sweet, and thy countenance comly.*

One, the conscience of their own infirmity and weakenesse, which maketh them like silly doves to hide themselves in corners, in the clefts of the rock, vnder the grices of the staires, in secret places, flying the sight of men, and not to dare to shew their faces.

faces. This hee remoueth with the consideration of Gods eternall election, and of his deepe and vnsearchable counsels, a rocke of strength to comfort her in her weakenesse: a sure hold and vnaccessable denne, whereunto no euill can approach, a fort impregnable, vnder the which she resteth, and shall rest safe for euer. And thereupon hee biddeth her to take heart of grace, to come vnto him, to walke before him, and to be vpright, to talke with him, to make him heare her voice in Praiers and the praises of her God. For that in Christ he accepteth her and is well pleased with her, both her person, and those spirituall sacrifices and fruits of her faith.

VERS. 15. *Take vs the foxes, the little foxes which
spoil the vineyards, and that whilest our
vineyards are bringing forth the tender
grape.*

The other thing that troubleth is the opposition of wicked and vngodly men, not the cruell tyrants of the world onely, but false teachers which nippe the Church in the head, and are the instruments of Sathans malice when it first beginneth to peepe, for then Sathan is euer busiest to seduce vs in the first birth of Christ in our hearts, waiting to kill and to destroy vs. These also hee saith hee will take order for, by sending workemen into his vineyard that shall spare none, not the least euill but by drawing forth the sword of holy discipline shall cut off all euill, and all meanes and occasion of

euill, which heere exhorting he promifeth, and in promifing he exhorteth his feruants the minifters of the Church not to be slack to doe, that fo thee may enioy perfect peace and pleasure, and all kinde of happineffe.

VERS. 16. *My welbeloued is mine, and I am his who feedeth among the Lillies.*

Vpon all which thee concludeth : glorying firft of her fellowship & communion with Chrifft; who as a good fhepherd feedeth his with fatiety of pleasures and delights that are at his right hand for euermore.

VERS. 17. *Till that day breath and thefe shadowes flie away, returne, be like, my welbeloued, to the roe or to the yong hart vpon the "fouered mountaines."*

*By fouered mountaines hee meaneth Mount Gilead which was fouered by the river Iordan from the reft of Iudea, 2. Sam. 2. 29. and was the beft place for courfe and for hunting.

And then wifhing his gracious prefence that he would come quickly to her, and not depart one heates bredth from her to the day of his laft moft bright appearance, when we fhall perfectly be receiued vnto the communion of Chrifft, and of all good things in him : that fo by his blessed prefence and the affiftance of his Spirit, thee may paffe thorough and ouercome all the mifts and shadowes of finne, ignorance and affliction that come in her way whilft thee is in this prefent world.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

VERS. 1. *In my bed anights I sought him whom my soule loueth: I sought him, but I found him not.*

VERS. 2 *Therefore I said, I will rise now and goe about the Citie by the streets, and by the high waies, I will seeke him whom my soule loueth. I sought him, but I found him not.*



Et once more the Church expresth her affection and longing after Christ: the wonderfull desire shee hath to cling neerer and to cleaue faster to him: and that in a more passionate manner then ~~er~~ she did before; thinking shee had lost him, when most she did enioy him.

By night and by day, vpon her bed and when she was vp; at home and abroad, within in the Citie by the streets, and by the lanes, without in the fields; with her selfe alone in the secret meditation of her heart, and by conference with others. First, godly bretheren (as she met them in euery corner) her fellows and familiar friends exercised in the like temptations.

VERS.

VERS. 3 *The watchmen which goe about the Citie found mee. to whom I said, did you see him whom my soule loueth.*

Then the publique watchmen of the Citie, the Lords remembrancer, whom he hath set ouer thy walles O Ierusalem, that all the day, and all the night they might not be silent of him: euery where and at all times, vsing all the meanes, from the lowest to the highest, she seeketh Christ, and can heare no tidings of him. That is shee cannot finde him present as she doth desire, and to her hearts liking in her owne sense and apprehension, though indeed hee be alwaies most present with her.

VERS. 4. *It was but a while ere I had past from them: when I found him whom my soule loueth. I tooke hold of him, not to let him goe, till I shall haue brought him into my mothers house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.*

At the last when she least looketh for it, and hath passed all the meanes, that the excellency may bee from God and not from them, shee findeth her hearts ioy, him whom her soule loueth. Shee claspeth him, and layeth fast holde vpon him, with purpose not to let him goe till shee haue brought him into her mothers house (like an honest and shamefast maiden that will doe nothing in such cases without her mothers priuitie) that is, till the happy time that the whole Catholick Church shall

shal grow vp in one body, to bee presented as a pure virgin, glorious vnto Christ.

VERR. 5. *I adure you, ye daughters of Ierusalem, tar-ry without with the roes, or with the hndes of the field. Stirre not vp nor waken this lone untill he please.*

VERS. 6 *Who is shee that should come vp out of the wilderness, as it were becesed with smoke that is raised vp, besensed with mirrh and incense better then all Apothecaries poulder.*

And now resting in his armes, shee desireth to remaine there so long as he shall please, that is to say for euer.

But then vpon the view and muster of his graces, she corrects her dullesse, and rapt with admiration, O, saith shee, what doe I meane? Am I so foolish to tye Christ vnto my sleee, to wish that he might abide here with me in the wilderness of this world, which is so crooked and empty of all goodnesse? Should not I my selfe rather (though I know the wicked world looks after no such matter) labour to be taken vp from hence by faith into his home and dwelling place, and vnto his spiritual marriage bed, the heauenly glorie of Gods Kingdome, and Ierusalem that is aboue. For the sweetnesse of it most fragrant and odoriferous, as all becesed

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with mirrh and incense of holineſſe, glorie, immortality, better then the beſt perfumes.

VERS. 7 *Behold his bed is better then Solomons, which threeſcore ſtrong men ſtand about, of the valiant men of Iſraell.*

VERS. 8 *All of them drawing ſword, expert in warre, each haſh his ſword by his ſide for feare anightes.*

For the ſafety, price, preciousneſſe of matter, and worke that exceeds the matter, farre beyond Solomons wedding bed, though it were moſt curious: for there indeed ſtood a continuall gard of threeſcore valiant men, with their ſwords by their ſides to keepe the chamber doore for feare of danger in the night. But he hath a thouſand thouſand ſtanding before him; yea ten thouſand thouſand miniſtring vnto him; Thrones, Dominions, principallities, powers, other manner of perſons in ſtrength and valure.

VERS. 9 *Fetter I ſay then the bed which King Solomon made him of the trees of Lebanon.*

VERS. 10. *Whoſe pillars he made of ſiluer, the beddeſteed therof of gold, the couerles thereof of purple. The middeſt of it paved with loue, by the daughters of Ieruſalem.*

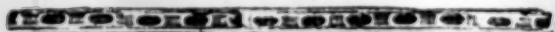
True it is, that bedde was made for a King, but this for the king of Kings, and Lord of Lords: the frame

frame there was of Cedars of Lebanon. the pillars siluer, the bedstedd gold, the couerlets purple. But heer the very streets, the market place is all of pure & beaten gold, shining as cleer christall. Where of shall we thinke (by that reckoning) that the bedde and furniture thereof is made. There the middest was pauerd most lonely with needle-worke, heere the ornaments and hangings are the shining glory of God and the Lambe, that the daughters of Ierusalem did work; this the Father of heauen. Thus doth the place where wee shall enioy Christ excell.

VERS. II. *Goe forth and looke ye daughters of Sion, vpon King Solomon, with the Crowne, wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of gladnesse of his heart.*

But if you compare person with person, ones ioy with the others triumphes, your owne eies will tell you when *Solomon* was at the highest, how infinitely he did come short. *Solomon* indeed had a Crowne that royally set him forth; but Christ hath many Crownes and diadems vpon his head; *Solomon* in his excellency and the crowne of his glory was a spectacle worthy to bee looked vpon and admired, but Christ to be worshipped, honoured, and adored, not of the maidens of Ierusalem onely, but of the whole hoast of heauen; *Solomons* heart leapt for ioy the day thht he was contracted,

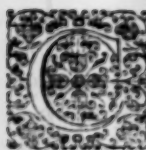
but Christ is anointed with the oyle of gladnesse aboue his fellows, with a heape and variety of gifts and graces, more then all men or Angels. So farre is he to be preferred.



CHAP. IIII.

CHRIST.

VERS. I. *Behold thou art faire my fellow friend, behold thou art faire: thine eies are doves eies from betweene thy locks: thy haire is like a flocke of Goates, which sheare upon mount Gilead.*



CHRIST here comforteth the Church against that anxiety of minde, which appeared in the former Chapt. shewing how gracious she is vnto him, how beautifull in his eies: not for any bodily, but for her spirituall bewty. Whether you consider her wholly and entirely, being all faire, or her members and lineaments one by one: eies, haire and locks, teeth, lippes, temples, her neck and both her breasts; all in that comelinesse and proportion, as is fit both for the discharge of the great duty of the ministry, and the common duty of christianity

stianity. Her eies first, how chaste they are? how simple? how doucelylike? if you consider eyther the faithfull Ministers, the eies and lights of the Church, whose care is to present vs chaste and pure virgins vnto Christ, or the eie of iudgement in euery Christian, which maketh the whole body lightsome, and keepeth them single and sincere in all things. Againe how comely they are within her locks, seemelily turned vp: for such is both the Churches decency, reiecting all toyish ceremonies, and the graue and sober carriage of euery Christian. And this haire so goodly shining smooth, as of fat Goates that feede in fruitfull pastures; these ceremonies, this carriage orderly, sober, decent, bring that reuerence to a Christian, that comelinesse to a Church, as make them both gracious.

VERS. 2. *Thy teeth are like a flock of even shorn sheep, that come up from the washing, which all of them doe bring forth twiunes, and there is not a miscarrying one among them.*

VER. 3. *The lips are like a threed of skarlet, and thy talke is comely: thy temples within thy locks are as a peece of pomegranet.*

VERS. 4. Thy neck is as the towre of Danid, built for
armories: a thousand targets hang therein,
all shields of mighty men.

VERS. 5 Thy two breasts are as two young hinds, the
twins of a roe which feede among lillies.

Goe vnto her teeth, they are equall, shining,
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dowble rewed, whereby she cheweth the meate of heavenly doctrine, both for her selfe and others. The Law of grace is in her skarlet lippes, speaking things comely and for edification. Temples like a rose to see to, & of the hew of a Pomegranet, beading beyond the haire. So naturall is her bewty, and her face her owne: for what needeth shee the dyings or colourings of worldly glory to set forth her spirituall bewty? or of humane wisdom to adorne the simplicity of the Gospell? Is her face onely and the parts thereof worthy to bee commended? doe not the rest as well excell? her neck of holy discipline, and gouernment to assist the ministry of the Word, and that compleat armour of prooffe which euery christian fighteth with, holdeth her vp and keepeth her steddy, more strong then all the weapons of any tower or armourie can doe. Lastly her pappes plumpe, round, faire, are full of all good nourishment of the sincere milke of the word of God, that flowes as from a streame out of both her breasts of that olde and the new Testament.

VERS. 6. *Till that day breath, and these shadows flie away, I will get mee vnto the Mountaine of Mirrh, and to the hill of frankincense.*

This description done, and made an end of, now to satisfie her request he promisseth that notwithstanding till the mariage daie doe come, when the mists of sinne, ignorance, and affliction that
are

are cast in this world before the eies of the Church shall fleete away, he must keepe his residence and aboade in Ierusalem that is aboue, where are his friends, who performe vnto him duties sweeter then mirrh and frankinsence.

VERSE 7 *Thou all faire my fellow friend, and not a spot in thee.*

VERS. 8. *With me from Lebanon, my spouse with mee from Lebanon shalt thou come, thou shalt looke down from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir, and Hermon, from the dennes of Lyons, from the mountaines of Leopards.*

Yet he will euer be present with his Church by his Word and the power of his spirit, sanctifying and cleansing the same, vntill being all faire without any spot or wrinkle in her, and so fitted and made ready for the wedding day, he do receiue her as his spouse, (that is to say a wife ioyned and married to her husband, for so he is bould now to call her, in regard of that prefixed time) into euerlasting life, and crowne her with glory and immortality. At what time he saith he will redeeme her (wholy and euery part, so as not one whom the Father hath giuen vnto Christ shall perish) from the most remote places and borders of the Land, and out of the clawes of Lyons and Leopards, her most cruell, fierce, barbarous and sauage enemies.

VERS.

VERS. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister Spouse. Thou hast ravished my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one chaine of thy necke.*

The remembrance of this day, and of the perfection the now hath in his iudgement & estimation of her, and then shal actually haue by his benefice bestowed vpon her, maketh him to cry out in the passion and vehemency of his loue, calling her Sister, as being of one nature, also his married spouse, professing shee hath ravished his heart with the bewty of her lookes, with the ornaments of her graces, that are as chaines about her neck, yea with one looke of faith, with that one grace of his sanctifying spirit in her:

VERS. 10. *How faire are thy lones, my sister spouse? how good are thy lones? better then wine, and the smell of thine ointements better then all spices.*

Amplifying with exclamations the excellency of her loue better then wine, and the sweete sauour of her ointements (the anointing of his spirit, sealing her vp to the day of redemption) better in sense and feeling, then all spices.

VERS. 11. *Thy lips, my spouse, drop the hony-combe, Hony and milke are vnder thy tongue, and*
at.

*the smell of thy garments is as the smell of
Lebanon.*

Thus having declared the feruency of his loue vnto her, hee doth by many figures and formes of speech, expresse the sweetenesse and the ornaments of her faith and of the fruits that proceed from it. Thy lippes (saith hee) both of them, that is, in the publique ministry, in priuate speech droppe the hony and the hony-combe, sweete and heauenly lessons and instructions, comforts and consolations, Out of thy tongue that milke of the Word is ready to come forth: thy smell is odouriferous, thine outward carriage and behaviour sweete amiable, and full of grace.

VERS. 12. *A gardaine enclosed my sister spouse, a
spring shut, a fountaine sealed vp.*

Thou keepest thy selfe most chaste vnto me, and thy fruits sound and entire as a gardaine closed, as a spring shut vp, as a fountaine sealed: for in thee is the cesterne of that wholesome and sauing doctrine, whereby the parts of the field, or gardaine of my Church, the beddes and plantes. (particular congregations) are all warred, and which no stranger can haue accessse vnto: for none entreth thither but in and thorough me.

VERS. 13. *Thy plants are as of an orchard of pome-
granets, with fruit of precious things: as*

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Cypres

Cypres with Spicknard.

VERS. 14. *Spicknard and Safron, sweete Canes and Cinamon, with all trees of Frankinsence, mirrh, and Santales, with al the chiefe spices,*

To conclude thy plants (meaning the fruits of faith) are most precious, as an orchard stored with all precious and delicate fruits.

CHURCH.

VERS. 15. *O fountaine of the gardains, O Well of liuing waters, and flowing more then the waters of Lebanon.*

The Church ioying in her spouses thus gracious accepting of her, doth first modestly attribute all she hath to him. Dost thou call me a spring and fountaine? giuest thou me the name of a gardaine? Vouchsafest thou mee such honour that my fruits should bee esteemed, as sweete spices? O but how soeuer I may in some sort disperse vnto mine the waters of life, yet thou in truth art the onely fountaine, from whose fulnesse we all receiue. I water, but from thee, thou art the onely well of liuing water, out of the which I doe drawe; thou art the wind and comfortable ayre that purgest thy gardaine, makest seasonable times, raine and faire weather, as is most commodious and best for the manurance of it. I, whatsoeuer I haue, meate, drinke, or any thing else, it is all of the gift of thy hand; my life

life and saving health I have, and hold from thee.

VERS. 16 *Awake O North, and com O South, breath
upon my gardaine. Let those waters over
flow the spices of it. Let my well-beloved
come unto his gardaine, and eate his dainty
fruits.*

Wherefore, saith she, deny not these two things
vnto me, blesse me yet more with all spirituall bles-
sings: Let thy windes blow vpon my gardaine, and
those liuing waters overflow my beddes and spi-
ces. Secondly, come and dwell with me, feast and
make merry in the midst of my soule and con-
science: for euen heere also (as well as in Heauen)
thou hast, as thou sayest, a gardaine?

CHRIST.

VERS. 17. *I am com into my gardain, my sister spouse,
I gather my mirrh with my spice, I eate
my hony-combe with my hony, I drinke my
wine with my milk. Eate fellow friends,
drinke, and bee dronke O yee my well-
beloued.*

O no, saith hee, you know not what you aske;
that were nothing good for you, and hurtfull to
many other: for yet til the marriage day doe com,
my place is to be in heauen with the infinite thou-
sands of holy Angels and spirits of the righteous
that are deceased: where I in them, and they in me

take incomparable pleasure & delight; and where I welcome and entertaine most lovingly with all dainties and delightfulness, the faithfull soules whom I dayly take out of this transitory world, into euerlasting glory,

CHAP. V.

CHURCH.

VERS. 1. *I being asleepe, but my heart awake, heard the voice of my wellbeloued, bountifull, open to mee, my sister, my fellow friend, my done, my undefiled one, for my head is filled with dewe, my locks with the droppes of the night.*



WE come now to the second part of this booke, which is the falling out between Christ & his Church. The fault whereof is first of all laid where it was, in the Churches unkindnes to him, which she her selfe sticketh not to acknowledge that it grew from her owne drowlinesse and carnall security: Although thus farre to bee excused, that it was thorough weakenesse and humane frailty, against her owne heart and liking; not with that fullowing of sinne that the wicked giue them-

themselues scope to runne into, nor with all her heart and soule. The spirit being alwaies ready to doe his part, though the fleshe were weake. Her faith was smothered, it was not put out: yet this one sinne (as the nature of such things is) went not alone, it was accompanied with a multitude of other sinnes: reiecting him so scornefully, who with his owne sacred voice spake vnto her to arise from the sleepe of sinne, and to awake vnto righteousness, and yet could not preuaile. What might be done that hee did not to reclaime, and bring her home? For the manner of his coming, it was not only knocking, but bounsing at the dore of her heart by the ministry of his Word, vehemently, earnestly, & more then once. The thing he did desire small in it self, so easie for her to graunt, as nothing could bee more: onely to open and to let him in. He spake so kindly, so louingly, in such a gentle and so earnest a manner, as might haue moued a heart of flint; gaue her such and so many, so sweete and so honourable titles all with one breath, my sister, my friend, my dowe, mine vndefiled one, bestowed such care and diligence to compasse his desires, as if it were his own good that he sought, and not hers. Hee (bearing all the infirmities of our nature, and the inconueniences of this life, compared to the night in regard of the life to come) refused to vndergoe no perill, nor wearisomenesse, or incommodity of weather, no toile or trouble for her sake; to goe by day or by night, early in the morning, or late in the euening, in faire or foule

weather, in the dewe and in the raine, his head and his haire, his skull and his locks, all beesprinkled and wet; that what heart (not made of stone) could be to vnkinde to let him stand without, in the raine and in the dangers, and hazards of the night?

VERS. 2 *To whom I answered, I haue put off my coate, how should I put it on? I haue washed my feete, how should I foule them?*

Yet for all that, euery vaine pretence, euery fond and friuolous excuse, was enough to keep her from admitting Christ, and from opening the dore vnto him; that dore of her heart whereby through a true and liuely faith, Christ doth make an entrance and is receiued, and more and more fruitfully applied vnto vs. A manifest argument what small account she made of him, and how little she set by the inestimable good that he came to bring vnto her: preferring a little ease and daintines, before the pleasures that are in him. Shee thought it (for looth) a matter of no small adoe to put on her coate againe, and rise when once she was abed, for feare of catching cold: she was loath to touch the ground with her feet now they wer washed, lest she should beray them, that is to say, she was loath to giue eare to euery call of Christ, for feare of disquieting her selfe, of drawing vpon her dangers, troubles, teares and losses if shee should follow him in all things: as if these or ten thousand greater discomforts then these could any way counterpeize,

peize, or lie in the ballance with the infinite blessings we haue by Christ. O flesh and blood how wise art thou to finde out a reason vnto thine owne heart? and to haue some blinde excuse or other for that thou wouldest faine doe?

Vers. 3 *My wellbeloued let downe his hand from the key-hole, when as my bowels earning within mee,*

Vers. 4 *I rose to open to my well-beloued, and my hands dropped Mirrh, and my fingers soft Mirrh in the handles of the lock.*

But the end and effect heereof was fearefull. Christ so repulsed went his wate: so shee lost her loue and could no more finde him: and then all too late her heart began to earne; shee fell then to haue a compunction of soule, remorse of her offence: and then (foole as thee was) when hee was gone shee rose to open vnto him: Yet so at the last disposing and framing herselfe vnto his call, the very touch of the handle of the lock, where Christ departing, had left behinde him such fragrant steppes and impressions of his fauour by the blessing and sweet smelling fauour of his Gospell, brought her to a consideration of her most vnworthy fact.

Vers. 5. *I opened to my well beloued, but my well-beloued withdrew himselfe, he passed away: I fell into a sound because of his speaking, & sought*

sought him, but I could not finde him, I cryed on him, but he answered me not.

And was enough now to make her to arise and open vnto him, (departed and gone away) whom present before and requesting it, shee had reiected. O then what would haue been the comfort if when he was at the doore hee had beene let in and entertained? Well, shee openeth now, but her loue is gone. Then strook with a conscience of her sinne, shee falleth into a twowne to thinke of his kinde and louing words, which shee so scornefully set at naught: shee seekes him by meditation of the Word, by calling to minde the promises of the Gospell, and his former mercies, but shee cannot finde him: she cryeth vpon him with praiers, teares, weepings, and lamentations, but hee will not answer.

Vers. 6. *The watchmen that goe about the Citie found me, they smote mee, they wounded mee; the keepers of the walles tooke my vaine from mee.*

Yet shee supported by his Spirit, not casting off her faith, continueth to seeke him still, and pat-terne perills past beleefe. The Ministers themselves and watchmen of the Church of God, whose part it was to gard her, were the first that did her wrong, smote, and wounded her tender conscience: and instead of speaking a word in due time to the wearied and

and distressed soule, did euen take her vaile from her, and beate her from holding fast her reuerend obedience and subiection vnto Christ.

VERSE 7. *I adiure you, ye daughters of Ierusalem, if ye finde my wellbeloued, what you should tell him: that I am sick of loue.*

Wherefore finding no comfort where in reason it was most to be expected, she getteth her to the maydens her friends and fellows, though not so well acquainted with Christ as shee. To them she is more bold to impart the ardency of her affection; asketh them after Christ, adiureth them, both them selues to take knowledge of it, and to let her loue vnderstand how she doth affect him.

The Maydens the CHVRCHES friends.

VERS. 3. *What is thy well-beloued aboue an other well-beloued, O thou fairest among women? what is thy well-beloued aboue an other well-beloued, that thus thou dost adiure vs?*

CHVRCH.

VERS. 9. *My well-beloued is white and ruddie, fitted for a standard-bearer aboue ten thousand.*

They wondring at her passion, as vnacquainted with such moods enquire what is in her loue aboue other loues, that shee doth so long and thirst after

G

him.

him. Whereupon she taketh occasion to describe her loue; First, by the bewty and excellency of his colour, (signifying his holinesse and perfect happinesse) white and red mixed together, with that temper that is in the best and strongest complexions, enabling him to doe any feate of activity about ten thousand other. For who but hee can sustaine the furie of the battailes of God, and yet gocaway with the honor and glory of the field? or of whom but of him alone can it bee said, that hee hath a crowne giuen vnto him, and goeth forth ouercomming, and must ouercome?

VERS. 10. *His head excellent gold, fined; his locks curled, black as a rauen.*

Secondly, by the members and lineaments of his body, head, haire, eies, cheeks, lips, hands, breasts legges, looke, pallate, and to conclude his whole selfe. His head, (wherein the grace of his humane nature standeth) precious as the most excellent gold, pure, bright, shining, as gold fined seauen times: for euen in his humanity, hee is the engrauen forme of the person of his Father, and the resplendence of his glory. His haire, first black as a rauen, then coloured and crisped; so faire hee is in the very least ornaments of nature, more then the sonnes of men.

VERS. 11. *His eies as doves eies by the streames of*
wa-

waters, washed with milke it selfe, set in cunningly.

His eies haue a threefold quality to commend them by: First amiable as the doves, as the neate and the dainty doves by the water side, in the gracious and comfortable looke which hee casteth on his Church. Secondly, white as milke, and shining with white, because hee is more pure of eies then that hee can behold iniquity. Thirdly, set in the hollow places as fir, and with as great art and cunning, as a stone by the artificers hand is set into a ring; so guiding and directing his sight to looke perfectly into all things, yea into the depth of the secret of mens hearts.

VERS. 12. *His cheekes like a bedde of Spice, growne plants of perfume, his lips to Lillies, dropping soft mirrh.*

His cheekes goodly and flourishing with a freshe and sweet beard, like a bedde of spices, like growne plants that serue for perfume: Such a grace and granity doth hee carrie. His lips in themselves as lillies, redolent for the smell, comely in proportion: to vs full of heauenly grace & sweetenesse, of most comfortable doctrine which droppeth from him, as liquid or soft mirrh.

VERS. 13. *Vpon his hands are rings of gold, set with*
G 2 *Chry-*

*Chrysolite, in his bowels is a shining, as of
Iuory, ouerlaide with Saphires.*

His hands are set forth with al ornaments precious & shining rings of gold set with the Crysolite, to note that not his person onelie but al his actions (done by the instrument of the hand) the whole gouernement and administration of his kingdom, is full of maiesty and glorie. His brest and all his bodie (for that is to be vnderstood by the bowels that are within) hath a shyning like Iuory, couered ouer with Saphires: for of a weake and corruptible bodie he hath made his owne, and will make ours in him glorious and incorruptible.

0 VERS. 14. *His legges are pillars of Marble, set vpon
sockets of fined gold: his countenance
as of Lebanon, choice as the Cedars.*

His legs are pillars of marble, leaning vpon sockets of the choicest gold, to shew his power and maiesty, being able to tread all his enemies, and whatsoeuer setteth it selfe against him, in peeces vnder his feete, and to make the rage of men to turne vnto his glorie. The looke and shew of his person, goodly as Lebanon, choice as the Cedars.

VERS. 15 *His pallate most sweete, and all of him most*

*to be desired. This is my well-beloued, and
this my friend, O daughters of Ierusalem.*

His pallat (that is his speech and the words that come from him) (for there, there lyeth his sweetnesse, from thence is all our comfort, and therefore this that so delighteth and refresheth all our senses, it doth her good once againe to speake of it) is most sweet and pleasant. What should I say more? he is wholly bewtifull, and all to be desired.

The maydens the Churches friends.

VERS. 16 *Whether is thy well-beloued gone, O fairest amongst weomen? whether hath thy well-beloued turned his face? that we may seeke him with thee.*

This discription doth so affect them, that they long to know of her, where her loue is become, burning with a desire to seeke Christ as well as shee. That is the fruit of the conference of Gods children.

CHURCH.

VERS. 17. *My well-beloued is gone downe into his gardaine, to the beddes of spice, that hee may feede in the gardaines and gather Lillies.*

G 3

VERS.

VERS. 18. *I am my well-beloueds, and my well-beloued
is mine, who feedeth among the Lillies.*


To whom she answereth, that hee is gone to Ierusalem which is aboue, there to repast with his friends as him selfe had said; and concludeth with an exclamation, that whatsoeuer calamity her own sinne had brought vpon her, yet the affection to her loue is firme and constant; and so shee assureth her selfe his is to her, though absent in Heauen. And by this meanes shee nourisheth that holy desire of seeking Christ both in her selfe and others: and together with her temptation findeth, by the goodnesse of GOD, an issue and way to come out of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

CHRIST.

VERS. I. *Thou art faire my fellow friend, as Thirtza,
comely as Ierusalem, terrible as an armie
with banners.*

HRIST here comforteth his Church against all the feares and terrours which the conscience of her own sinne might iustly pull vpon her; telling her that hauing by faith and the teares of true repentance washed away her former spots, she was now as faire in his eyes, and as amiable as euer she was before: all bewtifull and faire (being iustified & sanctified thorough Christ) as Thirtza, *Iero-boams* stately Cittie: seemely as Ierusalem the glory of all the Cities of the East, built as a Citie compact and knit together, wherein are all those worthies of the Lord of hostes, Pastors, Teachers, &c. in a most comelie order and gouernment of the Church: terrible in the Church-ministry and discipline, which is a rod to keepe in subiection euery thought, and to reuenge all disobedience: yea, terrible against Sathan and all the powers of hell. And how soeuer she had caught a sore blow, which might

might seeme to bee an argument of her cowardliness, yet in truth she was of an invincible faith and courage, and fearefull to her foes.

VERS. 2. *O turne thine eyes ouer against mee, that they may lift mee vp. Thine haire is as of a flock of Goates that sheareth on Gilead.*

VERS. 3. *Thy teeth like to a flock of sheepe which come vp from washing, which all of them doe bring forth twinnes, and there is not a miscarrying one amongst them.*

VERS. 4. *As a peece of pomegranet are thy temples from betwene thy locks.*

And therefore (saith hee) be of good comfort, looke vpon mee, haue faith in the promises of the Gospell: That shall be my ioy, and the crowne of my glory, who haue alwaies a sence and a fellow-feeling of thy miserys, and am like affected to thee, mourne when thou mourest, and am glad when thou reioycest. If thou doubt whether thy bewty still continue, whether it remaine fresh and constant, I assure thee it doth; and no fault or infirmity of thine can make it for to fade: for it wholly resteth in my grace and goodnesse. Thy haire, thy teeth, thy temples, all thy parts and members are every one as comlie, as faire, as well featured as before. Thy bewty doth excell.

VERS. 5 *Let there be threescore Queenes, and fourscore*

score Concubines, and maidens without number.

Thinke not, because there bee so many that glitter and flourish in the world, liuing in all wealth and iollity, and at their hearts ease, when it is ill with thee, when thou art humbled and fightest with many difficulties, hast warres without, and terrours within, that their condition is better then thine owne: as if they onely were happy and to be admired, thou base and contemptible. No, if they were euery one a Queene, or Concubines, and Ladies, neuer so many that attend vpon them, yet thou onely dost excell.

VERS. 6 *That one, my loue, mine undefiled one, that one with her mother, that pure one with her that bare her: as soone as the maidens see, they shall account her blessed; the Queenes and Concubines shall praise her, saying,*

VERS. 7 *Who is shee, goodly as the morning, faire as the Moone, cleere as the Sunne, terrible as an armie with banners.*

For thou art mine owne, most deare vnto mee, (with whose iudgement it is fit thou content thy selfe more then with all the glittering shew and pompe of the world) elect and chosen out of all kinred, nations, and tongues to bee my peculiar inheritance: I am cleare, simple, chaste, sincere, and vp-right before me. Who though now thou haue thin
H aboade

aboard on earth in this sinfull and wretched world, yet doest cleave so close to thy mother the heavenly Ierusalem, that the whole world hath thee in admiration. Such a starre of glorie and excellency shineth in thy forehead, for inward sanctity, and outward maiesty in the ministry and gouernment of the Church: Insomuch as there is none of all these braue and gallant Ladies, but though they thinke not as thou thinkest, nor walke as thou walkest, yet in their consciences they are all conuincd that the trueth is with thee alone. Thee they will admire, as soone as they doe behold thee; to thee they will giue the prize, and count thee onely blessed; attribute as much vnto thee, and lay as much of thee as I haue said and attributed: for bewty, pruity, vertue, continually encreasing.

V E R S. 3 *To the pruned gardaines I went downe to see the geene plants of the valley: to see whether the vine flourished, the pomegranets budded.*

And albeit I left thee for a while, yet with euermore lasting mercies will I resort vnto thee: I did indeed withdraw my selfe, but it was not for any mislike or indignation conceiued against thee: The trueth is, I had a longing to see how neer the time approached of our ioyfull and happy marriage, and therefore betooke me to my place of glory.

V E R S.

VERS. 9. *When I discerned it not, my minde set mee
upon the chariots of my free-hearted people, to
say,*

But perceiuing that day was not yet at hand, I
came back with speed vnto thee, together with
all my people, and retinue: by the ministerie of
those my free-willing seruants, with all speede and
earnestnesse to giue thee comfort. And now mark
and lay vp in thy heart what I shall say,

VERS. 10. *Returne, returne O Shullamite: returne,
returne, that wee may behold thee. What,
behold you in that Shullamite? as the daunse
of the Machanaimites.*

Thou hast indeed gone astray: that had almost
marred thee: but in mee is thy health and safety.
Returne, returne vnto me, that I and mine, all the
Angels of God, may haue ioy in heauen to see the
fruits of thy faith spring anew. For notwithstanding
thy slippes and failes, I esteeme thee most per-
fect in mine eternall countell and decree, and put-
ting all the robes of mine innocencie & righteous-
nes vpon thee, doe now so make thee by the pow-
er of my Word and spirit, my friends here and fel-
lows being iudges. Looke vpon her, tell mee how
you finde her: Is shee not most braue, glorious, and
gallantly attended? Verely when I doe behold her,
and all her troupes comming forth to meete mee,
me thinkes I am in the middelt of the Tribes of Is-

rael, and of all those worthies, that skipping and lepping with songs and daunces, and all kinde of holy meriments, came to receiue *Dauid* at *Machanaim*, when God brought him back into his kingdom.

VERS. 11 *How bewtifull are thy feete with these shoes, O daughter of a Prince? The compasse of thy thighs are like browches, the worke of the hand of a cunning workeman.*

And yet the neerer I come vnto thee, the more I admire thy bewry from the toppe vnto the toe, from one end vnto an other. To beginne at the lowest, and so to ascend. Thy feete shod with the preparation of the Gospell of peace. Thou daughter of a Prince! O thou of noble birth! borne not according to the flesh, but by the faich of the promise. The girdle of pure truth about thy hippes, framed by the most cunning workeman, the Spirit of God himselfe.

VERS. 12. *Thy nauell like a round bowle. Let not the Liquor of it faile. But let thy belly bee as a heape of wheate, bedged about with Lillies.*

Thy nauell round as a bowle, a token of thy fruitfulnessse. O let it neuer be drawne drie; but as a full cuppe wanting not any liquor; let thy wombe be alwaies fruitfull, and thy fruit precious
and

and fragrant as a heape of wheate hedged about with Lillies: So great a desire I haue of thine increase.

VERS. 13. *Thy two breasts are like two young roes, the twinnes of a hinde.*

VERS. 14. *Thy neck like to a tower of Iuorie: thine eyes to the fish-pooles made with art at the populous gate: thy nose like to the tower of Lebanon, that looketh towards Damascus.*

Thy two breasts as two hindes, fit to nourish and giue suck. Thy neck, the neck of discipline straight, and steddie, like vnto a tower to beare vp the ministerie as it were the face of the Church: and white and bewtiful as a tower of iuory for the order and grauity thereof. Thine eyes bright and cleere, as the fish-pooles made with great art at Ierusalem in the broad gate of the flocks, (for such is the ministry of the Church, placed where the godlie doe flock into the Lords assemblies) which shine as the cleere waters in the pond, for iudgement and knowledge: for deliury of doctrine are as the flowing of those waters: for wisdom in searching and waighing, preparing and fitting of it, may be compared vnto the workemen by whom those poudes were artificiallie made, and to their cunning workmanship. Thy nose straight and comely; as quick a iudgement in discerning doctrines, as the nose hath in discerning smells.

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VERS.

VERS. 15. *That which on thy head is put upon thee, is like to crimson, and the fillet of thy head is like to purple, a King might bee tyed to these walkes.*

The ceremonies, as it were the ornaments of thy head, both the haire-lace & the borders, & all thy whole attire are for comelines & good order of speciall account, and a great grace vnto thee: no lesse then skarlet and purple. There is no King in the world but might finde in his hart to be tied to these walkes, and to be held prisoner in the sight of thee, and of the bewty of thy assemblies. So great is thy glory in comparison of all the vaine pompe of this present world.

VERS. 16. *How faire thou art, and how delectable O Loue with these pleasures.*

I cannot hold, but I must cry out with an admiration of thy bewty, that thou art exceeding faire and amiable, not thy selfe onely, but all that is about thee: O loue onely to bee beloued.

VERS. 17. *This thy stature is like a palme tree, and thy brests like clusters of grapes.*

Thy whole body straight, strong, and of a comely stature. Thy Teates as berries.

VERS.

VERS. 18. *I say I will get up upon the palme-tree, I will take hold of her branches, and thy breasts shall now be like the clusters of the wine, and the smell of thy nose like apples.*

But I will not leaue thee so, I giue thee my word for it, (and that I promise be sure I will performe) I will prune and purge thee that thou shalt bee all fruitfull, redolent, and fragrant. Thy teates as the clusters of grapes, full of the sweete iuce of the milke of the Word of God. Thy nose shall both giue and receiue a smell of apples, that thou maist be as wel meate as drink vnto the soule.

VERS. 19. *And thy pallat as wine of the best smell, frisking, liuely, upright, making the lips of those that are asleepe to speake.*

Yea thy tongue (the preaching of the Gospell) shall bee as pure, strong and pleasant wine of the best smell and sauour, sprinckling, and leaping louely, frisking in the cuppe ; whereby euen those that sleepe, and are dead in their sinnes and trespasses shall be awakned, and with new lippes and words sound forth thy praise.

CHAP. VII.

CHVRCH.

V E R S. 1. *I am my well-beloued, since his desire is towards me.*

His comfortable speech of Christ vnto his Church doth so refresh her, that first she breketh forth into thankfulness for his mercy: In regard whereof she professeth shee is wholly his, whose affection she findeth to be so wonderfull towards her, that he loued her, when she cared not for him: followed her, when she refused him: called her back, when she ranne away from him: pardoned her, when she offended him: gaue himselfe anew vnto her, when she had forsaken him: seated her in Heauen, when shee was in the lowest hell.

V E R S. 2 *Goe to, my well-beloued, let vs goe forth into the Countrey, let vs lodge by the Cypres.*

Then she rouseth vp her dul & heauy spirits praying him, not alone, and by himselfe apart to spend his howers in obseruing of the time of their spirituall marriage, as hee said before he did: since shee
also

also had a care and longing to haue the same consummate as well as he.

Vers. 3 *Let vs get up early to the vine-yards: let vs see if the vine budde, the first grape open, the pomegranets sprout, there will I giue my Lones to thee.*

Promising withall not to be found henceforth vnready, not to be any more so droulie, so sluggish, so wretchlesse as shee was: but hereafter night and day to watch and attend that hower: and to enquire and learne after all the signes & tokens, when shee may come to be perfectly knit to Christ.

Vers. 4 *These louely flowers that giue a smel, & about our gates all precious things, new, and also old, my well-beloued I keepe in store for thee.*

In the third place shee consecrateth all shee hath vnto him, and vndertaketh in the meane time against the solemnization of that marriage, to provide all manner of presents, flowers, garlands, and the like, which men at such times are wont to straw at the thresholds, and in the entries. That is, to furnish her selfe with spirituall graces, and to lay vp in store plenty and variety of heauenly treasure, things both new and old.

VERS. 5. *O that thou wert as a brother vnto me, sucking the breasts of my mother: finding thee without I would kisse thee, also I should not be despised.*

But because there rest two great workes to bee accomplished before that time can come, the manifesting of God in the flesh, and the calling of the Gentiles, in them both shee sheweth her ardent affection, and therein the aboundance of her loue and zeale to Christ.

Fourthly therefore you haue her desire, which was the desire of all the prophets and holy men, to see the day of Christ, the day of his comming in the flesh: that hee might be her brother and suck the breasts of her mother; naturally of the virgin, spiritually of the Church vniuersall, where Christ is borne in the hearts of the faithfull by his Word and Spirit: for so comming among his owne, she, his owne and his onely owne, would kisse him and receiue him, both by faith and sense when shee should see with her eyes that Word of life, and behold him, and her hands should feele and handle him. So should she be free from the scorns of wicked men, their contumelies and despites that reproach the steppes of Gods Messias, and vex and molest the Church, whilst shee is in the expectation of that happie day.

VERS. 6. *I would leade thee, I would bring thee into the house of my mother which teacheth me: I would*

*would giue thee to drinke of spiced wine, of
the iuice of the pomegranets.*

Then (saith shee) there should be no delay : this, this should be the marriage day. I would euen now without more adoe bring you into my mothers house, which teacheth & instructeth me in all piety and good offices to you-wards, into the Catholick Church of God : that all growing vp into one bodie, whereof my spouse is the head, I might at the last be presented as a chaste and pure virgin, glorious to the Lord. Then would I giue him pleasures and delights for a King, and entertaine him with a most royall banquet of the graces of Gods spirit.

VERS. 7. *His left hand vnder my head, and his right
hand embracing me,*

VERS. 8. *I adire you, yee daughters of Ierusalem,
why should you stirre vp, or why should you
waken this loue untill he please?*

I haue sweete fellowshippe and rest with him : neyther whilest thus I were in his armes, and vnder his embracings, should any the least offence be giuen to him, I would be carefull to shunne all occasions of any more displeasing my loue, or of causing him to retire from me.

VERS. 9. *Who is she that commeth vp out of the wil-
dernesse, ready to ioyne her selfe to her wel-
beloned? vnder the very Appletree I wa-*

*ken thee, where thy mother was in labour
of thee, where she was in labour that bare
thee.*

HAVING thus set forth her desire of Christs incarnation, now shee bestoweth many sweete and gracious words to expresse and amplifie the vehemencie of this loue. First, by the duties shee will performe vnto him: great in themselves, but greater if you compare these duties of hers, with those that are to be looked for from other women. Was there euer (saith shee) any woman in the world, that would endure those labours, and take vpon her such perills as I doe to ioyne herselfe to her beloued? But I by faith overcome all difficulties to come to thee. It is a small thing in myne eyes, which to others seemes so hard, to put off the old man, to renounce this present wicked world, wherein is no pleasure nor sound delight, but a very wilderness and a desert, that I may finde thee out, and present my duties to thee: euen in that sweete and blessed place where thy mother (after the manner of other women, sinne excepted) fell in trauaile of thee. Let me for the certeinety and secret of this wonderful hidden mystery once againe speake it, where shee fell in trauaile that did beare thee. This labour, this toyle may bee an argument what and how great my loue is vnto thee.

VERS. 10. *O set me as a scale on thy heart, as a scale
on thine arme: for loue is strong as death;
zeale*

*zeale, hard as the graue. The Coales there-
of are Coales, nay a fire of the flame of
Iah.*

O doe thou loue me again, for this loue should be mutuall. Haue me in thy mind, with an earnest and continuall remembrance of me, set me before thine eies, imprint me vpon thine hand, as an inseperable ornament of thy glory, so as the wife is to her husband.

The second amplification of her loue, is by the properties adioyned to it, set forth by many elegant and apt similitudes. It is most vehement, most ardent, most constant, like to death which deuoureth all, or as the dominion of death which ouercommeth all. God himselfe (the mighty IAH) hath kindled it in our hearts by the powerfull light of his holy spirit neuer to goe out.

VERS. 11 *As such waters cannot quench this loue, nor
the flouds drown it. If a man would giue
all the substance of his house for this loue,
it should utterly be contemned.*

It is firme & inuincible, that neither force, fraud, nor promises, troubles and persecutions, pleasures or commodities, no height or depth, things present or things to come are able to preuaile against it.

CHAP. VIII.

CHURCH:

VERSE I *We haue a sister, a little one, and she hath no breasts: what shall we doe for our sister in the day that she shall be talked of?*



Firstly, the Church of *Solomons* time, as maimed and imperfect till the fullnesse of the Gentiles should com in, which then were a few, and rarely called, and without any ministry of their owne (as it were) breasts to giue suck, consuleth with Christ what course to take when the mystery so long kept secret shall bee reuealed and made knowne for their conuersion. How she may behaue her selfe in helping and administering vnto them: what Christ will bee pleased to doe in giuing an encrease and blessing. And thus she doth further testifie her loue to Christ, by her loue vnto their common sister. Sister to her, by the seede of the same spirit whereby they are both begotten vnto God: sister to Christ, by his assuming of the same nature to him.

VERS

CHRIST and his CHURCH both.

VERS. 2. *When a wall is to be built we will build it in
a pallace of siluer. When as a gate is to bee
fenced, wee will fence it about with boord
of Cedre.*

Christ and she make answer, telling what they
meane to do: that since when that time shal be, it is
not possible to containe the Church within the
narrow boundes of Ierusalem, which of a particu-
lar Church of the Iewes shall then bee made the
Catholicke Church of all the world; a new man-
ner of Citie must bee built: wherefore plucking
downe the mid-wall of partition, a new wall, and
new gates shall bee made to enlarge the Cittie: a
new gouernment and discipline, new officers, pa-
stor teachers, &c. to administer it. New, not in
substance, which hath alwaies been the same, euen
among the Iewes, but newly stablished, bewtified,
and translated to the Gentiles. Neither shall this
be any disgrace to the now Ierusalem, every thing
shall bee then so farre more glorious and more ex-
cellent. A house of saints shall bee erected by the
preaching of the Gospell, to bee the Pallace of the
great King: a stately and magnificent pallace, all of
siluer, which is the precious graces of Gods spirit:
the Gate, the euerlasting gate of this Pallace, where
the King of glory doth come in, the gate of our
heart, shall be seeled with faith more precious then
Cedre, by which onely wee receiue him and make
him ours.

VERS.

CHURCH.

VERS. 3. *I being a wall, and my breasts as towers, then shall I bee in his eyes as one that findeth peace.*

To this the Church (in the sixt and last place) replyeth that she is so far from envying this great good vnto her sister, as contrariwise when she (the Church of the Iewes) shall herselfe become of the same society, and by the communion of the Spirit, grow vp with the Gentiles into one Citie, embracing Christ, whom so long they shall haue reiected, and making one glorious part, both for government and doctrine of the heavenly Tision, Ierusalem which is aboue, shee shall then obtaine a great part of her desire, and bee in a manner perfected, not being far from that rest and happinesse which she longeth after, to bee receiued into the perfect communion of her spouse: For these are euery where called the last daies.

CHRIST.

VERS. 4. *Solomon had a vine-yard in a fruitfull place; he let out the vine-yard to keepers. Every one bringeth for the fruit of it a thousand pieces of siluer.*

Christ againe sheweth how precious the Church is in his eyes, and how much hee doth regard her, for this and all other her excellent parts: and that by a comparison in this wife; There is no King
(saith

(saith hee) and take *Solomon* the wise st, that if hee haue a vineyard in a fruitfull place, is able himselfe to dresse and to manure it, or to take all the fruit, but must be driuen to let it forth to others: And though his tenaunts and farmours pay him a rent for it, yet som part they look, and so reason would, they should keepe vnto themselves.

Vers. 5 *My vineyard which I haue, is still before my face. I receiue both that thousand of thine, O Solomon, and also the two hundred pecces of those that keepe the fruit of it.*

But I (saith Christ) neyther let out the Church, my vine-yard, nor suffer any part of the profits to goe from mee: for all grow vp into that bodie, whereof I am the head: I purse vp all the rent, and that also that *Solomons* lessees were to haue: So ieaious I am of mine inheritance, and haue mine eies alwaies vpon it, being euer present with it, and in the middelt of it.

Vers. 6. *O thou, see that setteſt in these gardaines, to the fellows which attend vnto thy voice, preach me.*

Hereupon he concludeth leauing this commandemēt as his last farewell to al the Churches, which are his gardaines wherein hee walketh and maketh his plants to grow, that in season, and out of season they preach the gospell to all that haue a mind

to attend vnto the wholsome doctrine.

CHURCH.

Vers. 7. *Flie to vs my well-beloned, and bee thou
like to the roe or young hart, O thou that
dwellest in the mountaines of spices.*

She shutteth the booke vp, vndertaking to doe
that which he enioyneth: but knowing her owne
vnability prayeth him to bee present with her, to
giue her strength to doe it from his throne of glo-
ry, which is in the highest heavens, and speedily to
accomplish all his promises by his last and glorious
comming.

Amen. Euen so come Lord Iesus.



OBSERVATIONS

on the Song of Solomon for

*the comfort of everie true**Believer.*

CHAP. I.

VERS. I. [*A song &c.*]

His excellent Song containeth a description of the state of a Christian man after he is once vnited vnto Christ, during our whole life, whilst wee walke here by faith, and not by sight. This is the summe of the

Booke. The parts are two; One the state of such a Christian when his faith and holinesse of life are at

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the

the highest, his signe in the Appogzon or middest of Heauen, that it cannot alter any point but it must decline, when he faileth with winde and weather, and hath the Sunne-shine of Gods fauour to goe before him; that is whilest he enioyeth peace of conscience, quietnesse and tranquility of minde, and is free from those great offences that make a kinde of separation between Christ and him, in the foure first Chapters. The other part setteth forth the state of a true Christian, comming to himselfe after that earthlinesse and worldly pleasures haue seized vpon him, when the cloudes and mists of of his owne sinfulnessse, of drowsinesse and carnall security, doe euercast the face of the heauens, and darken and eclipse the brightnesse of his glorie, in the foure last Chapters. The state of a Christian liuing in peace and quietnesse of a good conscience, hath three excellent steppes. First his loue of Christ, in the first Chapter. Secondly the benefits he receiueth from him, in the Second Chapter. 3. A desire to be made perfect Chap. 3. Whereunto Christ giueth answere, in the fourth Chapter.

The loue of a Christian soule to Christ (which is not possible to bee in any till Christ haue first loued him, and wrought in his heart a feeling of that loue) the holy Ghost doth thus describe.

VERS. 2.

1) First the vehemency of his affection, noting true zeale. For this loue is all fierie, and kindleth and enflameth the very bowels of the heart.

Let him kisse, &c. Secondly a desire to bee knit

VINO

vnto him as neere as is possible to enioy his sweete and blessed coniunction.

For thy lones are excellent, better then wine.]

Thirdly a preferring of the loue of Christ before all worldly things, and aboue all the pleasures and delights of this present life.

Because &c.] Fourthly, a magnifying VERS. 3.
and extolling of Christ, whose very name and the only remembrance of him is most sweet & fragrant, which draweth the Christian heart vnto a loue, and in loue to an admiration of him.

The virgins.] This loue if you consider the quality thereof, is chaste, holy, pure, and they only loue Christ who keepe themselues vndefiled from worldly pollution and vncleanesse.

Draw mee] The efficient cause is not in our VERS. 4.
selues, it commeth from Christ alone, who speaking to our heart by the ministry of the Word, and the sweet allurements of his spirit, pulleth vs out of this present euill world, and draweth vs after him.

Then will wee runne.] Heereby strength is put into vs, which maketh our feete nimble, and shod with the preparation of the Gospell of peace to runne after Christ, and with might and maine to performe all holie duties to him,

Let the King] Whereunto wee are enabled by the corroborating spirit of Christ, into whose hands God the Father hath committed all things, and giuen him all power in Heauen and vpon the earth, making him both Lord and Christ

the King and ruler of his Church.

Bring me into his privie chambers.] Who in his fauour and princely bounty communicateth vnto vs more and more the rich graces and treasures of his Spirit, maketh vs more inward with him, and leadeth vs as it were by the hand into his priuy chambers, those goodly roomes and parlours, where are all the Jewells and precious things laid vp for his people,

Wee will reioyce, &c.) This draweth from vs ioy in the holy Ghost, glorious and vnspokeable.

Wee will record &c.) It maketh vs neuer to satisfie our selues in setting forth and publishing vnto other the sweete comforts wee haue in him.

They shall &c.) Whom also wee desire to bee made partakers hereof, and to loue Christ as well as wee.

Who in all rightnesse doe loue thee.) For such men onely, the holy and righteous are the siluer trumpets fit to sound forth Gods praises in his sanctuarie. O if we euer felt how sweet a thing it is to haue his praises in our mouth, let vs not commit by word and deed, that through our owne folly and loosenesse so great a comfort should be taken from vs.

VERS. 5. *1]* Lastly wee are carefully to remooue all lets and impediments that may hinder their approach to Christ.

2)] Conflicts we haue great and grievous with our

our owne foules, many a pluck and wrestle; but by faith wee overcome them all.

black) Wee confesse our owne wretchednesse of our selues more black then any blackamore, and therefore vnworthy to be matched with so great a King: for wee are borne in sinne and conceiued in iniquity, and are by nature the children of wrath, euen we that lue in the Church, and are borne within the outward cōenaunt, aswell as other men. Eph. 2. Gal. 2.

but comlie.) But being purged and washed by the lauer of the new birth, wee are gracious and pleasing vnto Christ, more amiable and bewtiful in his eies then Solomon with all his brauery could bee to the eie of any mortall creature.

Looke not vpon mee) True it is, the world seeth VERS. 6.
not this honour which Gods children haue because it is spiriually discerned: it acknowledgeth not vs because it knoweth not him.

Yet the Christian man comfortoth himselfe himselfe in the testimony of his owne conscience, and and in Gods iudgement and estimation of him.

because I am blackish) Though hee carrie about many remnants of sinne, the reliques of his old *Adam*, and is manifoldly assaulted with the pricks & temptations of the flesh. For sinne is in vs as the spots are in the Leopard, not by accident, but by nature, which no art can cure, no water wash off, because they are not in the skinne, but in the fleshe & bones, in the sinowes & in the most inner parts.

By this meanes it cometh to passe that euen a

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regenerate man falleth many times, and falleth grievously and fearefully, loseth of his hold, and of the bewty that God hath given him.

Howbeit the seede of God abiding in him maketh that he cannot sinne finally and totally: for the oyle of Gods spirit wherewith hee is annointed, setteth the colours, which are of his owne tempering, so sure on, and maketh them cleave so fast together, that it is impossible hee should euer returne to his old hew, to be black, all black, coale-black as he was before.

The holinesse therefore of a Christian is alwaies mingled with sinne, his siluer with much drosse, not as chaffe is mingled with corne, but as wine is mingled with water, or as when two colours, black and white are mingled together, that there is no part white but it is blackish also.

Because the Sunne hath cast his beames upon mee
Hence it is that a Christian is subject to much affliction, anguish and distresse, as it were to the scorching of the Sunne, which turne all his moisture into the drought of Sommer.

Because the sonnes of my mother incensed against me
Especially his sinnes and infirmities expose him to the taunts and reproaches of the wicked, open mens mouthes against him, and against the holy trueth of God for his sake, who vpon every slip are ready to take aduantage to scandalize the Gospell.

Hereby a christian is exceedingly humbled, and cast downe, and driven to renounce and forsake himselfe

armes. Neyther can he ever satisfie his own soule, but desireth alwaies to rest there, without any the least interruption.

It is the voice) The cause of all comfort to the Church is the voice of Christ, speaking to her heart, and mouing and perswading her by his Spirit. VERS. 8.

His dealings are by degrees, and he useth not (ordinarily) to vnder all his fauours at once.

of my well-beloued:) First is his power supporting vs, that in our spirituall sickness the spirit bee not quenched.

Behold him,) Then hee speaketh a farre off, whispering as it were in our heart.

hee commeth) After hee commeth neerer, at the length hee is himselfe present.

Lepping, skipping) When he commeth, his coming hath foure excellent properties. First it is hastily and with speede.

Vpon these hilles, vpon these hillocks,) Secondly, no sinnes of ours, no vnworthinesse, can hinder his approach: all things, high or lowe, great or small offences, are too little for to stay him.

Standeth behind &c.) Thirdly, he doth not come so to our senses as wee desire: hee communicateth not his whole presence with vs, but standeth as it were behind the wall: so as there is a space betweene him and vs to keepe him from vs: Hee looketh but out of a casement, or as it were thorough a Lattice: for now wee see but darkely, and in a riddle. VERS. 9.

Shewing himselfe cheerefully.] Yet neuerthelesse (which is the fourth thing) this sight of his is most cheerefull, most sweet vnto the soule that loveth him: no plant, no tree, no flower, so delightfull to the outward senses, as Christ is to the true beleever.

VERS. 10. *My well-beloued spake*] But the dull heart of a Christian man had neede of the continuall voice of Christ, that hee should call and crie vnto vs, speake, and speake againe,

arise, &c.] (And the same words againe elegantly repeated in the end of the thirteenth verse) Yea vse all art and eloquence that may be to stirre vs vp to seek him,

my fellow friend, my faire one] And speak with all kindnesse vnto vs, that we may the better be perswaded he doth it for our good.

And here is the honour a Christian man hath, that Christ calleth vs not any more seruants, but his friends, and fellowes.

It is Christ that speaketh in the ministry of the Word. And we must heare the messengers whom hee doth send, as if Christ by them besought vs: be reconciled vnto God. 1. Cor. 5. 20.

VERS. 11. *For behold,*] The cause why Christ withdraweth himselfe is our owne security and negligence in seeking to him, our slacknes in prayer and other holy exercises.

The winter &c.] The time whilst wee lie in sinne is a heavy and discomfortable time; there is no pleasure to be taken in the base service of such a
master

master: for what fruit can we haue of those things whereof wee must be ashamed? the whole life of a wicked man, whar is it else but a sea of misery, full of feares & terrours, and expectation of the iudgement to come? which should make vs. hastily and with speed to labour to winde out of it.

The flowers appeare &c.) Contrariwise a Christian mans life (whatsoener the world deeme) is ^{VERS. 12} the onely sweete and comfortable life, like to the pleasant spring that refresheth all the senses: as hauing all things fresh and greene, and flourishing to the eies: all dainry to be cut and pruned with the hands: all cheerefull to the eares in the melodious noise and singing of the birds: all fruitfull and sweete to the taste: all odoriferous and pleasing to the smell: For a Christian man hath peace of conscience that passeth vnderstanding, which the world hath not, nor knoweth what it meapeth: a Christian man is full of ioy wrought in him by the holy Ghost, whom the world cannot receiue: a christian man whatsoener his estate bee, good or bad, strengthneth himselfe in his God, as *David* did when his Citie was spoyled, onely the bare ^{1. Sam. 30. 6} walles left, both his wiues carried away captiues, and the people ready to stone him to death: for well he is assured that nothing falleth out but for his good, and in loue and mercy to him: a Christian man hath accessse to God in all his troubles and aduersities, familiar conference and communication with him, & goeth boldly vnto the thron of grace: a christian man is endued with spirituall glo-

rie and wisedome, which doubleth the beaurie of his countenance, and maketh his face to shine: a Christian man hath the holy Angels of God, those glorious and most renowned creatures, to be as it were his seruants, for they serue Christ, with whom he is one: Lastly, a Christian mans honour is not in regard of this life onely, but as a crowne of future excellencie, hee hath fastened in his heart the anchor of hope to stay and quiet his minde in all the stormes and tempests here, till he arriue at the hauens of all his rest.

Arise) Now the more these things excell, the more we must enforce our selues to follow after them: to pursue them speedily, to goe out of our selues and to come to Christ: by anie means taking heede that the pleasures of *Sodome*, the filthie pleasures of our former life, and of this wicked world, make vs not looke backe vnto them, but to cast them off with all our might, and to flie awaie from them.

My fellow-friend, my faire one &c.) There is not anie so effectuell an argument to prouoke men hereunto, and to stirre vs vp to godlinesse, as the consideration of Gods mercie, and of the dignity we haue by Christ.

Vers. 14. *My Dove that dwellest in the chilles, &c.*) But though the state of a Christian man be such and so excellent as before hath beene described, yet to humble him that hee be not proude, God leauerh, as it were, prickes and thornes in his side, as he did to the Israelites, manifold infirmities, which make him

him to blush for shame, and not to dare to shewe his face : thinking in very truth most basely of himselfe, and that hee is of all the world the meekest : not worthie to come almost in the sight and presse of men : how much lesse into the glorious sight and presence of God ?

Shew me thy face, make me heare thy voice :) Notwithstanding the testimonie of his conscience, walking in simplicitie and sinceritie as before the Lord, maketh him (emboldned by the word of God) to lift vp his head to come before him, and to call vpon his name.

For thy voice is sweete, and thy face comelie.) Which the Lord graciously accepteth, and is well pleased with : accounting his person holie, and his prayers, and other the fruites of his faith, sweet and acceptable through Christ.

Foxes,) It is the perpetuall lot and condition **V E R S. 15.** of the Church to nourish in her bosome secret enemies, that closely vndermine the good of it : for all that are in Israell are not of Israel ; and manie are among vs that are not of vs : but God in his good time will discouer hypocrites, how foxe-like soeuer they carrie themselves.

Take vs, &c.) Some mens sinnes are manifest aforehand ; going before vnto iudgement, and some mens follow after ; but those that are of this sort cannot be hidden. The sword of discipline is to be drawn by the Ministers, and other into whose hand God hath put it, for the cutting off of known offendours, and remouing of all offenses.

The Foxes,) Great ones are not to bee spared though they be as iolly foxes, as *Herod* was.

The little Foxes,] The small cubbes are not to bee neglected, though they can but nibble at the Vines.

Which destroye the Vines:) All euill, and occasion, and shew of euill is to bee remoued: so much the more carefully, because from little beginnings growe great proceedings: and a small offence in the Church of God, many times, turneth men awaye from the loue of the truth before they be settled in it.

Whilest our Vines are bringing forth the first grape.) Sathan also is euer busiest to seduce and drawe vs from the faith, when Christ is first borne within vs: waiting to eate vp, and destroy the children of the Church as soone as she is deliuered.

Hereby the vse, the excellencie, the necessitie of discipline is seene: it restraineth offences that they breake not forth, it staieth them where a breach is begunne.

VERS. 16. *My Welbeloued,)* After manie conflicts with our owne soule, God maketh vs in the end to feelee more liuely our fellowship with Christ.

Is mine, and I am his,) The roote and fountaine of all our happinesse, is our coniunction, and communion with him.

Who feedeth in Lillies:) The fruites comming from it, excellent: for CHRIST our Shepheard feedeth his flocke in most sweete and delicate pastures.

Till

Till that daie breath.) The two principall things VARS. 17.
which a Christian is to wish for, and desire after,
are perfection in heauen by the comming of Ie-
sus Christ, and constancie and perseuerance vnto
that day.

And these mistes flie awaie.) In this life manie
mistes and shadowes are cast before our eyes, much
ignorance of God and of holy duties: which that
bright and glorious comming of our Lord and
Saviour, (as the rising of the Sunne,) will scatter
all awaie.

CHAP.



CHAP. III.

VERS. 1. 2. *In my bed anightes, &c.*

He childe of God hath manie times great ynquietnesse of mind for lack of the feeling of Christ.

Being so affected as a man desolate and without comfort, he seekes after him in al places & at all times, in the night and by day, a bedde and when he is vp, at home and without doores; in the Citie, by the streetes and the lanes, and abroad in the fields; by private prayer and meditation with his owne soule: by vsing the helpe, counsell, and aduise of godly brethren; by seeking for comfort at the hands of the Ministers of the word. Such is his desire and vnwearied trauaile for the finding of Christ.

Here is the vse wee should make of being priuate: and this is a holy spending of our time, when we employ it in stirring vp our soules to be assured of the mercies of God in Christ: not, (as the world for the most part doth), in studying how to wreake our malice, or to compasse other wicked desires, neither yet in idle and fruitlesse pastimes.

The

himselfe, to goe out of himselfe, and to be no bodie in his owne eyes.

But yet hee locketh vnto Christ, whose garments of righteousness are broad, and large and wide enough to couer all imperfections: and who of his free grace is pleased to accept him, and to bestow vpon him the ornaments of his Spirit, whereby howsoeuer in much weaknesse and in the midst of many frailties, yet in the truth and soundnesse of his heart, being sincere and upright before him, albeit the least of these things were enough to discourage him from euer coming vnto Christ, or hating any more to doe with him, yet neither for other mens reproaches, nor for all the conscience of his owne infirmities hee leaueth to seeke vnto him, to call and cry vpon him, for whither else should he goe but to things that cannot profit?

haue made me a keeper of other vines, &c.) There commeth yet a further mischief; home-enemies, borne and bredde in the bosome of the Church, which as vipers eat out the bowels of their mother, and make naturall rents, and breaches among their owne brethren.

For God euer more leaueth in his Church some vnquiet spirits to gall them, for the tryall of the faith of his children, that the approued among them may be knowne.

And let men pretend what they list, set what face they will vpon it, it is the hatred of the truth, and of the professors of the truth, that maketh them

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so

so to stirre: because worldly minded men cannot abide the sincerity of the Gospell, that fighteth against their pompe, pride, and ambitious designs.

And howsoever they lay the fault from themselves, and cast it vpon Gods children, that stick close to the ordinances of God, as wayward and conceited persons: yet in truth they are the factious, and those that make dissention in the Church.

Howbeit the best men that are, the holiest Churches, and most reformed assemblies, are often times turned out of the right waie, partly mislead and seduced through a vaine allurement of humane wisdom, partly carried away by the violence of the stormes and tempests that these men raise against them.

Yet we must not please our selves in the deformities of the Church: our care must bee to haue al according to the paterne that was shewed in the mount.

VERS. 7.

Shew me where thou feedest, &c.) To this purpose we are wholly and throughout to submit our selves to be ordered by the chiefe shepheard and Bishop of our soules, for hee onely must direct all necessarie things in his Church by the wisdom of his Word: from him wee receive the foode of sweete and heavenly doctrine: hee it is that ordereth our labour and our rest, euen at noone day, the whole gouernment and guidance of his house.

O thou whom my soule loneth.) The sins of Gods elect

elect, through his wonderfull wisdom that bringeth light out of darkenesse, and good out of euill; turne vnto their comfort, make them more to call and crie vpon Christ, to loue him more with all their soule, to desire more earnestly to bee ioyned vnto him, and to vse all holy means of attaining thereunto.

(Synoone) And that with such affection, that when other are resting, or taking their repasts, the christian man can haue no comfort, nor eate his meage vnlesse he be with Christ.

(Thou feedest, thou makest thy flocke to lye, &c.) This meanes of comming vnto Christ is the ministry of the word in the Church and Congregation of Saints, which are, as it were, one fould vnder one Shepheard, feeding with the food of life.

(For why should I be as one that pitcheth her tents by the flocke of thy companions) Herein great care and circumspection is to be had, that we ioine not our selues to false teachers which com vnder the name of Christs shepheards, but inwardly are rauening wolues.

(If thou know not) In which behalfe the faith-VARS.8
full man though he be in Christ, and shine in the graces of the Spirit, yet laboureth of much ignorance, and is many times ouertaken, and therefore had neede to be instructed and set into the way:

(Get thee out, &c.) Which is to trie the Spirits whether they be from God, for the touchstone of all doctrine is by the word, if it bee heavenly and celestiall, not sauoring of the world.

VER. 9. 10 *Vnto the troope, &c.*) And being so, as many as walke according to this rule, the badge of the Israel of God, peace is vpon them and mercie; such a mans person is accepted to God, the graces and ornaments of the Spirit in him are sweet and pleasing.

VERS. 11 *Borders of gold we will make,* Yea God, the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost, the most blessed and glorious Trinity, will deck and set him forth more and more, and bestowe more good things vpon him; and more enrich him with all heavenly blessings, transforming him from glory vnto glorie.

VERS. 12 *My Spicknard giueth forth his smell.*) These promises comfort the Christian soule, and bring a sweet refreshing to the senses.

VERS. 13, 14 *My Welbeloued is as a bundle of myrrh.*) Acknowledging all to come from Christ, and from the vertue of his power.

Whose excellency we must consider not simply, as it resteth in himselfe, but as by the sweet influence of his graces, he maketh vs partakers of it.

And since he vouchsafeth to bestow these sweet things vpon vs euen now whilest wee are strangers from him, and walke heere by faith and not by sight, what and how great things must those needs be which then wee shall enioy when Christ, which is our life shall reueale himselfe from heauen?

VERS. 15 *Behold thou art faire &c.*) In the ioyfull expectation of which happy and blessed time that wee faint

faint not nor be discouraged, Christ doth still confirme his loue vnto vs: and by his Word and the comfort of his spirit assureth vs how pleasing wee are in his sight: both thorough our imputed righteousness, which maketh vs faire, all faire before him: and for the fruits of holinesse and sanctification in a doue-like chastity, and simplicity without any guile.

Behold thou art &c.) Wee againe returne the praise of all this vnto him who is our only righteousness, and through whom alone it is that we bring forth fruit alwaies fresh and flourishing, and acceptable vnto God through the communion we haue with Christ, dwelling and walking in the midst of vs as in his house and temples. VARS. 16.

The bewty of our houses &c.) The excellency of Christs glory is to be seen in the publick assemblies: we must not look for it in ciuil Courts & meetings, at faires & at markets, in pastimes & sports, in banqueting & feasting, though all these in their time and place be lawfull. But if we will see Christ in his bewty we must goe to the Church and congregation of his Saints, where the same shineth and sheweth it selfe in the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. VARS. 17.

CHAP. II.

VERS. 1. *I am the Rose &c.*]

L the good wee haue commeth from Christ, who is most sweete himselfe, and the author of sweetnesse vnto others.

VERS. 2

As a Lillie.) The Christian thus formed and fashioned by the mighty operation of his spirit, excelleth all the world beside: for in them onely are all sound vertues to be found; Piety, Iustice, chastity, temperance, prudence, fortitude, magnanimity, which eyther are not at all in the wicked, or at the least they haue but a shadowe of them: dead and drie stalkes onely, the flower and blossomes are in the godlie.

among thornes.) All men beefore they bee in Christ are but thornes: not only vnprofitable and void of good, but noxious and hurtful, replenished with all euill.

VERS. 3

As the Apletree &c. so is my well-beloued,) The Christian man neuer satisfieth himselfe with the magnifying of Christ,

under his shadow &c.) The shade of whose bowghs

bowghs doth so refresh his soule, that he delighteth to dwell and haue his aboade vnder it for euer: for hee onely it is that with his sweet shadow fenceth vs from the burning wrath of God:

For sweete is his fruit &c.] Being renewed by the holy Ghost hee conceiueth an incomparable delight in those good things that are so wrought within him: In comparison whereof he despiseth all the gew-gawes, that the world so admireth and doateth after.

He brought me into his banquetting house.) The VERS. 4
author of our vocation, regeneration, iustification, sanctification, and saluation is Christ, whose owne most sacred hands leade vs to this sweete and delightfull feast.

hauing loue) The cause hereof is not in vs, but from himselfe, first louing vs, and by his loue as by a banner set before vs, drawing vs to loue him againe, and to range our selues vnder his colours.

Yea, keeping vs so neere about him and so fast vnto him, by the power of his Spirit, that it is impossible any should pull vs out of his hands, or that so much as one of those should perish, whom God the Father hath giuen vnto Christ.

Stay me, hold me vp) The instrumentall cause VERS. 5.
he useth is the preaching of the Word by his ministers and seruants.

with these flagons, with these apples:) The Word I say of reconciliation, which is the ioyful and glad tidings of our peace made with God, sweeter then the hony and the hony combe, and therefore
com.

compared here to wine and apples: not the doctrine of the Lawe, which is the ministry of death and condemnation.

The assemblies of the Church where this heavenly Gospell soundeth, are excellent helpe to quicken our dulnesse, and to make vs feele a greater measure of the loue of Christ:

For I am sick of loue.) For the heart of a faithfull man, euen when it is best affected, is subiect to many qualmes, to much vexation and disquietnesse of minde: to bee euen sick as it were, for the loue of Christ, because he cannot enioy him as hee would. And then is the word preached most sweete vnto his soule.

VERS. 6.

His left &c.) The whole vertue and power of the ministry commeth from Christ: they water and plant, but he only giueth the encrease, they doe their worthy endeavour to stay and vnderprop our faith, but that notwithstanding, we shall shall soone fall to the ground, if Christ put not to his hand to keepe vs vp.

Left hand, right hand.) Yea such is our vntowardnesse, the naturall corruption that is in vs, so great, the worke of our new birth so marueilous, so hard to bee brought about, and to goe through with, that wee had neede of both the hands of Christ to bee about vs, to claspe and hold vs fast, least we fall away.

VERS. 7.

I adure &c.) The beleeuers is wrapt with an exceeding ioy and comfort when once hee feeleth himselfe to haue Christ, and to lie as it were in his armes.

I sought:) The conferences of Gods children, their confession of sinnes one vnto another, and mutuall praiers for each other, whet one an other, as iron whetteth iron: and it is a sweete thing to conuerse with such, by whom wee may this way receiue comfort.

The Wash-men &c.) Especially the holy Minister shinerh most, and is the sanctified meanes to bring vs to Christ. VERS. 3.

Yet God delayeth his comforts manie times, euen to those that with vpright hearts and consciences from the bottome of their soule seeke after him:

That wee may learne not to depend vpon the meanes, but vpon God, and to attribute all to his grace and vertue.

Christ therefore is not alwaies to bee found to our minde, nor in our sense and feeling, though we vse all good and holy meanes for it.

Howbeit, for all that, he is indeed alwaies present with his people.

did ye see him whom my soule loueth?) The loue of Christ cannot bee concealed: a man may sooner keepe in the winde with his fist, or stay the oynment of his right hand from bewraying it selfe (as it is *Prou. 27. 16*) then not to vtter his loue to Christ, whomsoever he meet, fitly withall. I spake of thy Lawe before Princes (sayth *Dauid*) and was not ashamed.

I found him, &c.) Christ being sought carefully and diligently, will at the length bee found ac-

VERS. 4.

N

cor-

according to his promise; *Seeke and ye shall finde, &c.* he neuer returneth the desires of his seruants emptie.

(When I had past but a little from them) This he doth manie times when there is least hope, and when all meanes haue beene vsed and doe not preuaile: for euen the seed of the word bringeth not forth fruit by and by, but lurketh and is buried vnder the cloddes of the earth till the time appointed for it to shoote vp and to shew it selfe.

(whom my soule loueth.) He is then sweetest to vs when he hath seemed for a while to absent himself, and to haue no minde of vs. And that maketh him so oft to withdrawe the comfortable beames of his glorious presence, that so he might whet our affections, and set an edge vpon them.

(I tooke hold on him,) For thus when he sheweth himselfe againe vnto vs, wee beginne to haue our faith reuiued, wee lay faster holde vpon him, and with all the powers of our soule, cleaue as neere vnto him as euer we did before.

So we come to be possessed of spirituall ioy and gladnesse, then we are brought abedde (as it were) in a sweete sleepe of the peace of conscience, and then our heart is lifted vp to heauen with holie praies and meditations.

(not to let him goe till, &c.) The faithfull man, with purpose of heart cleaueth to the Lord, (as *Barnabas* did exhort, *Act 11. 23.*) and hath a holy purpose, and Christian resolution neuer to part from him vnto the end.

I ad-

I adiuſe you &c.) When a Chriſtian commeth **VERS. 5.**
to haue a feeling and apprehenſion of Chriſt, (eſpecially after hee hath once found what it is to lacke him) he is carefull to auoide all occaſions that may giue Chriſt cauſe to depart.

Come vp,) The thing that aboue all other affectioneth a Chriſtian mans heart is the loue and meditation of the heavenly glorie; **VERS. 6.**

Out of the wildeſneſſe,) In compariſon whereof he eſteemeth this world as a wildeſnes in regard of fruitfull and pleaſant fields. And longeth to come out of theſe rough and deſert places into the Lords champions.

who is ſhe) It is indeed a hard piece of worke to leaue the world, to denie vngodlineſſe and worldly vanities, and to liſt a mans heart and affection vp to heauen:

Becauſed with Mirrh, &c.) None can attaine vnto it, but thoſe whoſe eies God ſhall cleer to ſee and behold the excellency of that place.

For the heavenly glorie dooth incomparably **VERS. 7.**
excell: there is all ſafety to the perſon: **8. &c.**

All ſweetneſſe to the ſenſes: **VERS. 9.**

All pretious things and riches, all pleaſures and **VERS. 10**
delights.

The glorie of all the earth, *Solomon* himſelfe **VERS. 11**
in his greateſt brauerie, is not to bee compared to it.

The glorie, the pleaſures and delights, which God giueth heere to the ſonnes of men, for their comfort and reioycing, muſt affect our hearts

with a holie meditation to thinke how farre more excellent those things bee that are aboue : and make vs thereby the more earnestly to seeke after them. This is the holie vse wee are to make of the lawefull pleasures of this life,

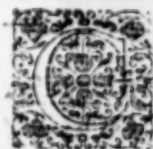
Come forth and looke ye daughters of Tsyon, It is the duetie of a Christian man to stir vp other to this heavenly meditation, as Christ by his Spirit hath stirred him.

CHAP.



CHAP. IIIL.

VERS. I. Behold, thou art &c.]



Christ much delighteth to see a Christian so affected as is set forth in the former Chapter, and rendereth therefore due commendations: praying him for the graces that himselfe hath bestowed vpon him, and so crowning his own gifte in him: with all, making him to see what is his blessed estate both in this life, and in the life to come.

Faire,) The true believer thorough faith in Christ, is most perfectly holy and righteous, both wholly and in euerie part: as hauing in him obtained by imputation the whole righteousness of the lawe.

The vertues which a Christian is most to labour for, and which beleeue him best are,

thine eyes are Doves eyes,) First, Iudgement and singlenesse in all his actions, to haue his eyes in his head as *Solomon* speaketh, *Ecclesiast.* 2. 14.

according to his promise; *Seek and ye shall finde, &c.* he neuer returneth the desires of his seruants emptie.

When I had past but a little from them) This he doth manie times when there is least hope, and when all meanes haue beene vsed and doe not preuaile: for euen the seed of the word bringeth not forth fruit by and by, but lurketh and is buried vnder the cloddes of the earth till the time appointed for it to shoote vp and to shew it selfe.

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I tooke hold on him,) For thus when he sheweth himselfe againe vnto vs, wee beginne to haue our faith reuiued, wee lay faster holde vpon him, and with all the powers of our soule, cleaue as neere vnto him as euer we did before.

So we come to be possessed of spirituall ioy and gladnesse, then we are brought abedde (as it were) in a sweete sleepe of the peace of conscience, and then our heart is lifted up to heauen with holie prayers and meditations.

not to let him goe till, &c.) The faithfull man, with purpose of heart cleaueth to the Lord, (as Barnabas did exhort, *Act 11. 23.*) and hath a holie purpose, and Christian resolution neuer to part from him vnto the end.

I aduise you &c.) When a Christian commeth **V E R S. 5.**
to haue a feeling and apprehension of Christ, (especially after hee hath once found what it is to lacke him) he is carefull to auoide all occasions that may giue Christ cause to depart.

Come vp,) The thing that aboue all other affectioneth a Christian mans heart is the loue and meditation of the heauenly glorie;

Out of the wildeernes,) In comparison whereof he esteemeth this world as a wildeernes in regard of fruitfull and pleasant fields. And longeth to come out of thele rough and desert places into the Lords champions.

who is she) It is indeed a hard piece of worke to leaue the world, to denie vngodlinesse and worldly vanities, and to lift a mans heart and affection vp to heauen:

Becenssed with Mirrh, &c.) None can attaine vnto it, but those whose eyes God shall cleere to see and behold the excellency of that place.

For the heauenly glorie dooth incomparably **V E R S. 7.**
excell: there is all safety to the person: **D. & C.**

All sweetnesse to the senses: **V E R S. 9.**

All pretious things and riches, all pleasures and **V E R S. 10**
delights.

The glorie of all the earth, *Solomon* himselfe **V E R S. 11**
in his greatest brauerie, is not to bee compared to it.

The glorie, the pleasures and delights, which God giueth heere to the somes of men, for their comfort and reioycing, must affect our hearts

with a holie meditation to thinke how farre more excellent those things bee that are aboue : and make vs. thereby the more earnestly to seeke after them. This is the holie vse wee are to make of the lawefull pleasures of this life,

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CHAP.



CHAP. IIII.

VERS. I. *Behold, thou art &c.*]

Hrist much delighteth to see a Christian so affected as is set forth in the former Chapter; and rendreth therefore due commendations: praying him for the graces that himselfe hath bestowed vpon him, and so crowning his own gifte in him: with all, making him to see what is his blessed estate both in this life, and in the life to come.

Faith,) The true believer thorough faith in Christ, is most perfectly holy and righteous, both wholly and in euerie part: as hauing in him obtained by imputation the whole righteoussesse of the lawe.

The vertues which a Christian is most to labour for; and which becom him best are, *and his eyes are Doves eyes,*) First, Iudgement and singleness in all his actions, to haue his eyes in his head as Solomon speaketh; *Ecclesiast. 2. 14.*

Thy heart is like &c.) Secondly, sobrietic and a comely carriage.

VERS. 2. *Thy teeth, &c.*) Thirdly, holding fast the truth of God by meditation and chewing of it.

VERS. 3. *Thy lippes, &c.*) Fourthly, Gracious speech, that our words be powdred with salt, for the profit and edification of the hearers.

Thy temples.) Fifthly, to affect more spirituall graces then worldly things.

VERS. 4. *Thy necke is as a Tower, &c.*) Sixtly, Constancie in the waics of godlinesse,

A thousand Targets hang, &c.] And to haue alwaies in a readinesse the compleat armour of Christian Souldiers.

VERS. 5. *Thy two breasts, &c.*) Seauently, To long after the sincere milke of the word of God that we may growe vp by it. 1. Pet. 2. 2.

VERS. 6. *I will get me &c.*) Christ is alwaies present and at hand to euery true bele cuer, euen now whilest hee is in the pilgrimage of this world to comfort him in all his necessities.

These shadowes] The holinesse and sanctification which we haue wrought within vs in this life, is weake and imperfect, subiect to much ignorance, and manie shadowes, so as wee are neuer here to dreame of purity or perfection.

He awaie.) But the time shall certainly come when we shall put off these ragges and be cloathed with immortalitie.

VERS. 7. *Thou art all faire, &c.*) Our holinesse now imperfect and mingled with so much corruption shall

shall be made perfect that no spot or wemme shall be left in vs.

With me shalt thou come] None shall perish of V^{ERS.} 8
those whom God hath given vnto Christ.

From Lebanon, from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon,) The furthest and most remote places cannot keepe them: the craggedest and roughest thickets cannot detaine them; the height nor depth cannot conceale them:

From the dennes of Lions: From the mountaines of Leopards,) The cruellest and most sauage enemies of the Church shall not be able to hurt them: nor hell gates to preuaile against them. Heere is the comfort of Gods people.

But this we must arme our selues for, that whilst we continue here, wee are to liue amongst Lions and Leopards, barbarous and fierce enemies, Tyrants and oppressours: we must looke for banishments and imprisonments, to wander in the mountaines, to be throwen in holes and dennes, to be afflicted, persecuted, distressed (as you haue examples of it, *Heb. 11.*) This is the perpetuall condition of the Church of God.

By how much the more wee are to waite for that happy time, when as in the yeere of Iubile we shall all returne vnto our possessions againe: when wee shall heare no more the voice of the exactor, and when the seruant shall bee free from his Master.

Thou shalt looke downefrom, &c.) This shall heape vp ioy vpon ioy to vs, that wee shall then
looke

looke ouer these men, that is, triumph ouer them, that now so dominier ouer vs: when not only our selues shall be in heauen in the place of all happinesse, but haue before vs and in our eies the sight of their misery.

Thou hast rauished &c.) God is not onely delighted, but in a manner rauished with a loue of his graces in vs.

my sister) For he doth behold vs as the brethren of Christ: brethren both by vnity of the same nature, and communion with one heauenly Father.

Sponse) Yea neerer then brethren, being euen heere espoused and betrothed to him.

VER. 10. *How faire &c.*) And kept by the anointing of the spirit, that wee cannot fall away, but abide and continue his for euer,

Which giueth vs more contentment and heartscalc, then all pleasures that are earthly.

VER. 11 *Thylips drop the hony combe: &c.*) The tongue of euery Christian (not only of a minister in the pulpit, though that especially) and the dropping of his lippes, euen in his priuate and familiar discourses, is sweeter then the hony or the hony-combe, as that which giueth grace to the hearers:

the saueur of thy garments, is as the saueur of Lebanon.) Such an one is most pleasing to God, of as fragrant a smell as the smell of Libanus.

VER. 12 *My sister sponse is*) The Church of God hath two singular prerogatiues aboue all other companies and societies of men.

as a gardaine &c.) First it is the pillar and ground of truth: for there onely are the plants of the Lords owne setting: there is the well head and there onely flow the sweete streames of pure doctrine. It is varity, errour, superstition and deceit whatsoeuer commeth not from hence.

(*first sealed up.*) Secondly it is holy, no polluted or vncleane thing can enter or haue abode in it.

(*spring fountaine.*) The preaching of the Word is as a spring that watereth and maketh to encrease all the beds and plants of the Church of God.

A Christian man knowing his fruits to be most sweete vnto God, VERS. 13;

Is desirous to bring forth plenty, and acknowledging al to com from God, continually prayeth VERS. 15.
to be inspired and breathed vpon by his good spirit to performe it. 16.

(*fountaine of the gardaines*) Christ is the onely fountain that watereth al the parts of the Church his gardaine: the ministers are onely his instruments and can doe nothing but water and plant: all the encrease commeth from Christ.

O well of liuing waters, &c.) The graces hee bestoweth vpon his Church are abundant and infinite, as liuing waters that continually spring and flow abroade.

O North, O South, &c. Let those waters ouerflow the spices of it.) Hee neuer denyeth his spirit to those that aske it with a true faith, but is ready to graunt the desire of his seruants to make them fruitfull,

O

and

and abundant in every good grace.

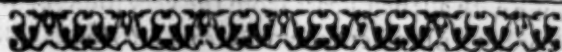
Let my wellbeloved come, &c.) And the thing which a Christian man about all the world desires, is the presence of Christ.

Yas. 17. *I am come into my garden &c.)* Yet there being somewhat alwaies corrupt in our desires, it is many times good for Gods faithful children to goe without the things, even the spirituall and heavenly things, which they most long after.

ate my fellow friends &c.) The Spirits of the righteous deceased, doe now enjoy in heauen everlasting happinesse.

This is our comfort against death; that thereby we change the miseries of this life with unspeakable and endlesse pleasures.

CHAP.



CHAP. V.

VERS. 1. *Being asleepe,*

Christian man, euen the best, is many times ouertaken with carnall security, falleth into a traunce or slumber, forgetteth himselfe and his heavenly calling, and is lulled a sleepe with the pleasures and delights of this present wicked world: Not keeping that watch ouer his owne soule which hee ought: (*Mathew 25. They all slept: the wise virgins as well as the foolish*)

but my heart awake.) Yet his faith (for all that) goeth not quite out but lyeth hid and couered vnder the ashes, it is smothered, but not extinct; as may bee scene in *Peter*, of whom our Sauour beareth witnesse, *I haue prayed for thee, that, in the midst of that most dangerous fall, thy faith should not faile.*

Heere is one maine difference betweene the children of God and others: One sinne of infirmity, the other wilfully: all sleepe indeede, but the godly doe but slumber or winke, when the

wicked sleepe soundly, sleepe heart and all, they sleepe that they snort againe, the wicked commit sinne with all their heart from the very soule as the Prophet ~~upbraided~~ *Isaiah 28:10* Gods children have a resistance within, and strive and fight against it in som sort, even then when they are most overtaken with the ~~infinite~~ *infirmities* of the flesh: their heart is sound with God: sinne dwelleth, but rageth not in them: they groane under the burden of it, mislike it as touching the inner man: there is a strife within them in their very bowells, as betweene *Rebeccaes* twinnes (a type of the Church, and of every faithfull man.) To conclude, in the godly there is a strife betweene their heart and their heart, but in the wicked onely between their heart and their conscience.

(The 2^d) The Christian delighteth to make confession of his finnes, to acknowledge his owne wretchednesse and unworthinesse, that God may have the greater glory. Hee sticketh not himselfe to have blushing cheekes, so honour & praise may come to God, and is not ashamed to be the promotor of his owne reproach. This is true repentance.

(The 3^d) One mark thereof is a holy anger and indignation against our selves, amplifying and enlarging all the circumstances of our sinne, to make it more odious, and to bring vs vnto a greater loathing of it.

(The 4th) But the Christian though before God and men doe make confession of his fault

fault, and it be the property of true repentance for a man to aggravate; nor to lessen his offence, as not satisfying his owne soule with a detestation of his wicked waies; yet hee useth also a holy excuse and defence, that Sathan by his *ouercharging of himselfe* (to vse the Apostles phrasis 2. Cor. 2. 8.) take not aduanrage to cast him downe further then is meete, and to driue him into despair: Hee therefore wrestleth with his owne soule to gather all arguments that may bee to his conscience, that these his offences were done of frailty and through infirmity of the flesh, that his heart is sincere & vpright to God; that his faith, though sore shaken was not quite battered and overcome &c. This is the wildome of a sound Christian: And heere is a noble example of that other marke of repentance which the Apostle (2. Cor. 7. 11.) calleth an Apologie or cleering of ones selfe. *the voice of my well-beloued,*) True repentance commeth not from our selues, it commeth by the preuenting grace of Christ: not onely that repentance which is our first conversion to God, but the raising of vs vp, when being conuerted wee fall into any sinne.

The principal cause of this our conversion is the Spirit of Christ knocking at the doore of our heart.

The meanes is his voice speaking to our outward eares, specially by the ministry of the Word and sacraments, as principal: but further also in a secundarie degree, by chastisements and corrections.

Bountifull.) Wee haue neede that God should call vpon vs earnestly, vehemently, and in most effectuall manner. So carnall are we of our selues, and so vntoward to hearken to him.

Yea, we had need againe and againe to be beaten vpon, and all little enough. So you haue the truth of that which *Elisha* telleth *Iob*, *God speaketh once and twice, and a man doth not discern it.* *Iob.* 33. 14.

Wee are speedily to turne to God, and not to put off our repentance: for so much also doth the word *bountifull* import: Signifying all three that is to say, earnest, and often knocking, and a desire speedily to be let in.

Open.] Of our selues and by nature we are held prisoners and captiues of *Sathan*, as it were vnder lock and key, till *Christ* open the dore and let vs loole by his word and the power of his Spirit.

God ceaseth not to vse all good meanes that possibly may be deuised to drawe vs home vnto him. What, how many, and how gracious arguments dooth hee bring in this place? Taken first from the easinesse of the thing, it is but to open the doore.

To me.) Secondly, from his owne person, open to me; not your enemy, but your friend, your lover, one that seekes your good.

My sister &c.) Thirdly, from our person that should not sticke to doe a greater matter then that.

My fellow-friend, my Dove, my undefiled one..) Fourthly, by the manner of his speaking with all the

the sweet and kinde words that can be imagined, speaking to our heart (as he sayth hee will, *Hos.* 2: 14.) and beseeching as it were when he may commaund. *As if Christ besought you by vs* (sayth the Apostle) *2. Cor. 5. 20.*

For my head is filled with dewe : my lockes with the droppes of the night.] Fifthly, by comparing his owne cares, labours and traueiles taken for vs, whom wee may be ashamed so vnthankfully to requite, that wee will doe nothing for him againe. Thus he leaueth no meanes vnattempted, no arguments, no perswasions to call vs backe when we goe astraic.

The loue of Christ wherewith hee hath loved vs ought to be a speciall motiue for vs to loue him againe. So *Paul* teacheth, *2. Cor. 5. 14. 15.* *For the loue of Christ constraineth vs, iudging this, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And he died for all, that they which liue, might no more liue vnto themselves, but vnto him which died for them. &c.*

To whom I answered,) Sinne goeth not singly VERS. 2.
and alone, one and no more: but the nature of it is for one sinne to drawe manie other after it.

How should I &c.) Sinne for the most part is ioined with hardnesse of heart; and where sinne hath once seized, without a great mercie of God, it stoppeth all the passages from admitting of the voice of Christ.

I haue put off my coats &c. I haue washed my feete &c. how should I &c.) Where sin possesseth the soule, *Sathan* is strong and forcible, to cast mistes
be.

before vs, to make every babble, not worth the naming, to seeme a great matter in our eyes, and sufficient to hold out Christ.

Put it on, soule them.) A little ease & carnal pleasure, with those that haue not their hearts effectually touched, preuaileth more then all the ioyes and delights that are to be found in Christ.

VERS. 3,

My welbeloued let downe, &c. Wee must receiue Christ when hee offereth himselfe vnto vs: for if we refuse him, hee will not alwaies continue knocking. *Seeke the Lord whilest hee may be found. Esay 55.6.*

But the ease, pleasure, and commodities of this life, are great impediments to hold vs back, and to make vs seeke all manner of delaies.

The Word and all other outward meanes profit little, vnlesse it please God by his spirit to make the same effectuell. Therefore in *Hoshea 2.14.* with the Word and with afflictions is ioyned his owne perswading of vs by the inward working of his Spirit, without which the other availeth nothing.

The ministry of the Word bringeth not forth fruit alwaies at the instant: but many times the sweete impression that it leaveth behind, euen then when it seemeth to fall by the waie side, is at the length, in his time, effectuell to draw men into God.

My bowels earning within mee.) God offereth not his to lie still in security, as hee doth the wicked: (which is an other difference betweene the two)

two) but one time or other awakneeth them out of the sleepe of sinne, how long soeuer they continue in it.

The two degrees of repentance are heere to bee obserued; First, an earming of the heart, compunction of soule and spirit, comming from a sight of our sinnes, and preaching of the Lawe. So it is said, *Dauids* heart smote him when hee cut off the lap of *Sauls* garment, to thinke hee had so dallied with that monster of sinne. And *Ier.* 31. 19. bringeth in *Ephraim* saying, *After I shall be made to know my sinne I will clap on my thigh, in token of mourning.* As contrariwise of the wicked the same Prophet saith, *Ier.* 8. 6. *There is none that saith, What haue I don?*

I arose to open to my wel-beloued.] The second is a conceiuing of comfort, a raising vp of our selues by the sweet promises of the Gospell, for both see *Acts* 2. 37, 38, 39. VARS. 4.

My hands dropped mirrh, and my fingers soft mirrh in the handles of the lock.) The very sweetnesse that Christ leaueth behinde him, when to our feeling hee departeth from vs, and as it were the shadow of his presence, doth marueilously rauish a Christian man: This appeareth by the ioy and comfort that the people of God tooke in the Arke, the Temple, and other symboles, which *Phineas* wife shewed when she so bewailed the taking of the Arke, that she called her sonnes name, *Ichabod, The glory is departed.* 2. *Sam.* 4. 21.

How much more sweete then must it bee to re-

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ceiue Christ himselfe, to enioy his owne presence, which bringeth all good things with it.

I arose to open &c.] A third note of repentance which the Apostle speaketh of, (2. Cor. 7. 11.) is heere also to be seene, *studie*, or care and diligence; that is to say, a framing of our heart and disposition to awake from sleepe, and to seeke after Christ,

VERS. 5. *I opened &c.]* And a putting of the same in execution.

my well-beloued withdrew himselfe, he passed away,)

Christ for our incredulity and hardnes of heart, doth somtimes after a sort leaue vs for a while, withdrawing all comfortable sense and feeling of his grace. This is that spirituall desertion that Gods children may fall into, and is one of those heavy iudgements that God punisheth their sinne withall.

I fell into a swoone) A fourth note of repentance is zeale, to taint for the abience of Christ, and to be sick of loue for him.

I sought him, I cryed on him) A fift also, to seeke him, to call and crie vpon him, to wander vp and downe after him; finally to leaue nothing vndon till wee finde him, which the Apostle calleth a longing, or desire after him.

because of his speech:) The meditation and calling to minde of the word of God, of that which wee haue heard in the publick congregations and assemblies, is very profitable for the quickning & raising vp of our soules.

but I could not finde him, but hee answered me not.)

Christ

Christ to trie the faith of his children. seemeth many times to deale very hardly and vnkindely with them: the fountaine of mercy, to haue no drop of mercy in him. So hee dealt with the woman of CANAAN, *Mat. 15. 22. &c.* First when shee cryed vpon him, hee made himselfe deafe, hee would not answere one word, but turned himselfe away, and when his disciples besought him to speake, how vntowardly and techely (as a man with reuerence may say) doth hee seeme to answere her? *I was not sent but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel:* Shee for all that humbling her selfe yet more, and falling at his feete, in what reproachfull manner doth hee vse her, calling her a dogge, or rather for more disgrace a whelp. How must not this wound her very soule? He that biddeth all men learne of him, because he is meeke and lowly in heart, to bee so rough to a poore sillie weoman so deiecting herselfe before him? but wherefore did he so? to discourage or driue her from him? No; but that her faith being tryed in the furnace, might come forth purer then the gold, and after many a pluck and wrestle, like a true Israelite supported by his Spirit, shee might preuaile with God: and so at the length he suffereth himselfe to be ouercom by the greatnesse of her faith.

The watchmen that goe about the Citie found mee.) VERS. 6.
A Christian truly repenting will not thinke much to throw himselfe into neuer so great perills and hazards for the recovery of Christ. And so is expressed the sixth marke of repentance: consisting in

a reuenge or taking the peny-worths of our selues for our former transgressions, not shrinking now for any danger, but running thorough thick and thinne (as wee say) in the night, among the watch, to come vnto him.

All this sheweth the feare that a Christian man hath, least hee should bee ouertaken with drowsinesse, as he was before, which is an other and the last of those seauen notes of true repentance, mentioned 2. Cor. 7. 11.

And so haue you in this Chapter, (besides the falles and infirmities of Gods children, and how and wherein they differ from other men,) a worthy example of the cause, the means, the parts, the steppes and degrees, and lastly of the notes and markes of their repentance.

they smote me, they wounded me,) An other punishment of our sinnes is affliction, outward trouble and persecution, which God is wont to send vpon vs, to chastise and correct vs, and to make vs come to him.

the keepers of the walles tooke] Those that should bee the greatest friends vnto vs for the truths sake, proue many times our greatest enemies, such as carrie the name of watchmen in Gods Church, whose office it is to encourage and protect vs in well doing, none more then they do oppose themselves and discourage vs in the waies of godlinesse.

my vaile from me.) This is a great offence and stumbling block to Gods children: who by reason heereof lose their vaile, that is the hold of their
-purit

purity and integrity, and begin a little to decline, and to waxe fainter in the seruing of God: *I adure you*]

Till by the company of Gods children in the communion of Saints, they begin to take heart againe, and to recouer their spirits, and so afresh follow after Christ. VERS. 7.

ye daughters of Ierusalem) The society of the godly is an excellent meanes to stirre men vp, and to kindle in them the holy fire of the loue of Christ: For with them wee may boldly confesse of such things as the world saoureth not, nor hath any relish in.

if ye finde &c.) Yea, though they be not come so far as we in comprehending the length, breadth, and depth of the excellency of the loue of Christ.

What is there in thy well-beloued? &c.] If to those that dwell in the Church it be strange to see the passions that many of the godly are exercised with in their longing & thirsting after Christ, what shall we thinke of other men? VERS. 8.

White & ruddie, fit to beare the banner about 10000 VERS. 9.
his head, &c. The things which wee are specially to consider in Christ, are, First, his spiritual glory and power, shining euen in his humanity: 10.

His eyes as doves eyes &c.) Secondly, The eyes of his providence, or the perfection of the graces of the Spirit dwelling in him; whereby hee pearceth euery where and entreth into mens hearts, seeing the things, that are most secrete. VERS. 11.

his lippes, his pallat, &c.] Thirdly his doctor-shippe, or Prophetical office. VERS. 12.

VERS. 13. *Upon his hands &c. his legges are pillars of marble, &c.)* Fourthly, his government and administration of the world, in glory, maiesty and power, chrushting to peeces the wicked and vngodly, and whatsoeuer doth set and oppose it selfe against him.

14. *in his bowels is a shining, as of iunory, covered with Saphires: his looke as of Lebanon &c.)* Fifthly The glorifying of his humane nature, which he hath purchased by his death and sufferings.

VERS. 16. *that we may seeke him &c.)* The fruit of a Christian mans temptations is, that other by our vehemency are stirred vp to seeke Christ.

VERS. 17. *My well-beloned is gon downe &c. I am my well-beloned &c.)* Christ in the end is found of those that seeke him, though he absent himselfe for a time, as he was of the woman of Canaan, *Mat. 15. 28.*

18. And this is our comfort, that God is faithfull, who will not suffer vs. to bee tempted above our strength, but in euery temptation, how great soeuer, will giue vs a meanes how to come out of it, *1 Cor. 10. 13.*

By mutuall conferēce and communication of of our faith, we haue the same strengthened, and nourishe and kinde in our selues a holy longing after Christ.

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CHAP. VI.

V. RS. 1. *Thou art faire &c.]*

The Rue repentance watheth off all the spots and deformities that our sinnes bring vpon vs.

terrible as an armie with banners.)

The life of a Christian is a warrefare vpon earth: For the enabling of him to fight the Lordes battailes, God infuseth into his heart an heroicall and noble courage: for though hee fall, yet he riseth vp againe: though hee bee ouertaken, yet hee getteth out and reconereth his strength,

Which maketh Sathan to feare the faith of a Christian, because hee knoweth it is built vpon that rocke which the gates of hell cannot preuaile against.

O turne thine eyes ouer-against me,) Our slippes and failes must not discourage vs: but wee must looke vp to Christ with a liuely faith and bee of good comfort,

that they may lift me vp.) For Christ glorieth and taketh pleasure in the faith of his people: it reioy- ceth his heart, and he thinketh himselfe the better for:

V. RS. 2.
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for it, being affected with their miseries, and is glad when they are comforted.

Thy haire is &c.) The holinesse and righteousness of a Christian is not lost by the manifold infirmities hee falleth into. But it remaineth firme and constant in euery part; because it wholly resteth in the power and grace of God.

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my deare,] One because she is elect out of all the world.

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the Sunne.) The way of a righteous man is like the Sunne shining, that shineth still more and more vnto the steddie day, *Prou. 4. 18.* Or, as *Paul* saith, (*Rom. 1. 17.*) we goe from faith to faith, our faith continually growing as the morning doth, and from one degree of perfection to another: from the beauty of the moone, to the cleerenesse of the Sunne.

To the prained gardaines,) The kingdome of V E R S. 8.
God, the glorie of the heauenly *Ierusalem* is that which we ought alwaies to meditate of, and to haue the eyes of our soules fixed and bent vpon: beeing like the gardaines that are kept drest, most pleasant and goodly to the eye, and that yeeld all sweet and delectable fruit.

I went downe,) Christ himselfe by his example inviteth vs to take pains to watch and obserue the time of his comming: whereunto he doth exhort. *Math. 24. 42.*

To see the greene plants of the valley: to see if the Vine flourished, if the Pomegranets budded.) By earthly things wee must learne to meditate on heavenly: and if wee be able to discern of the times and seasons of the yeere, that when wee see the trees

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There be manie signes of this glorious coming of Iesus Christ: for which, see that whole chapter, *Matthew* 24.

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What behold you in that Shulamite? as the daughter of the Machanaimites) Christ comforteth his soule by the beholding of our holinesse and righteousness.

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Let not &c.) There is not aie thing more pleasing to him, then the spread of the Church of God, and a continuall encrease of the fruites of it, which are as glorious in his sight as a heape of wheate hedged about with Lillies. *VERS. 12.*

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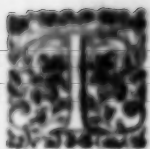
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VERS. 13 *Thy two breasts &c.*) Secondly, A teachablenes
to sucke the milke of the word of God.

VERS. 14 *Thy necke &c.*) Thirdly, Constancie to hold vp
the truth of God. O

Thine eyes &c. thy nose &c.) Fourthly, Iudge-
ment to weigh and discern of doctrines.

VERS. 15 *That on thy head is like skarlet, &c.*) Fifthly, Gra-
uitie, and a wise carriage in all our actions;

A King might be tyed, &c.) Which good graces
being in vs and abounding, not onely knit mens
hearts vnto vs,

VERS. 16. *How faire &c.*) But make God himselfe to loue,
17. and to admire vs.

VERS. 18 *I say &c.*) The word of Christ ought to be an
assurance to vs, that wee shall be sanctified more
and more: howsoever when we looke on the one
side to the resistances that are against vs, and on
the other side to our owne weaknes and corrupti-
ons, wee haue iust cause to despaire. But hee that
sayd, *the Word is able for to doe it*, as easie it is for
him to make vs all whole, as it was to say, *take up
thy bedde and walke*. Ioh. 5. 8.

*I will get up upon the Palme-tree, take hold of her
branches, &c.*) The best man that is hath need of
much hand, to be continually pruned, and lop-
ped, and to haue his superfluous branches shred
from him to make him fruitfull.

I will &c.) This must be the worke of Christ
himselfe: Who, as else where he is compared to a
Vine

Vine, so heere compareth himselfe to the Husbandman, that taketh vs in hand to trimme and looke vnto vs: *Without him wee can doe nothing.* Ioh. 15. 5.

Thy teates shall now be like the clusters of the Vine: and the sauour of thy nose like Apples.) The fruite of Christs presence with vs, and of his taking vs in hand is excellent: it maketh vs sweete before him, fragrant, acceptable, and comfortable vnto other.

Thy pallat as wine making to speake the lippes of VERS. 19
those which sleepe.] The preaching of the Gospell, is that which raiseth men out of the sleepe of sinne, and maketh them to speake with newe tongues to the prayse of the glorie of God.



CHAP. VII.

VERSE 1. *I am my Welbeloueds, since his desire is towards me.*

THe mercies of God in pardoning and forgiving our sinnes and taking vs to his fauour, are so farre from opening a window of libertie vnto vs, that contrariwise it ioyneeth and knitteth our soules more neere vnto him, maketh vs more entirely to loue him, and rowzeth vs vp from drowlinesse and negligence to a greater watchfulnesse ouer our waies, and a care to please him.

That is true repentance which groweth from a consideration of Gods mercies and of his loue: not that so much, which the feare of wrath and of his iudgements doth wring from vs.

VERS. 2.3 *Let vs goeforth &c.)* True repentance is scene by walking in a quite contrarie course to that wee walked in before: therefore it is called a turning; as if a man whose face is bent Westward, should wholly turne himselfe and set it vnto the East.

Let vs lodge by the Cypres: let vs rise in the morning, &c.) It is the certaine note of the childe of God to waite with all watchfulnesse and obseruation for the glorious comming of Iesus Christ:

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The day of whose comming is that happie time of our spirituall mariage, and most straight and neere coniunction with Christ: for then shall wee enioy him fully and perfectly, and see him as he is.

These lovely flowres &c.) To him we must consecrate our selues and all we haue; for whatsoeuer he hath giuen vs, all the graces of his Spirit, all the good things we doe enioy, are not too good to be bestowed vpon him, to entertaine Christ the better; that is the true vse of the blessings of God. VERS. 4.

O that thou wert as a brother vnto mee &c.) A Christian man is impatient for the desire of Christ, and longeth that euen this day before too-morrow were the time of our perfect enioying of him. VERS. 5.

Finding thee without I would kisse thee) Our loue to Christ where it is sincere and sound, will manifest it selfe to all, and by all meanes.

I should not bee despised.) The perpetuall state of Gods children is to be vexed, scorned, and despised of the world.

But against this we must comfort our selues with the remembrance of that time, when all teares shall be wiped from our eyes.

I Would bring thee into the house of my Mother which teacheth mee,) In the Church the word of God is to sound, and there it is that men are to bee taught and enformed in his waies. VERS. 6.

I would giue thee to drinke of spiced wine &c.) There is nothing we haue or can come by, that is too costly or sumptuous to bee bestowed vpon Christ. Wherefore the woman in the Gospell hath
her

her iust commendation for powring the Alabaſter boxe of Spicknard, moſt coſtly ointment vpon the head of our Sauour Chriſt, though *Iudas* the traytour repined at it.

VERS. 7. *His left hand vnder &c. I adiure you, &c.* Our former offences and the fearefull effects comming from them, muſt teach vs when we haue Chriſt againe to make more of him, and to take heed that by our looſeneſſe and negligence he withdraw not the comfort of his preſence.

VERS. 9. *Who is ſhee that commeth out of the wilderneſſe readie to ioyne her ſelfe to her welbeloued.*

There is no ſound pleaſure to be found but in true pietie: all the delights of the world without that, are but as the wilderneſſe in compariſon of pleaſant and fertile ſoyle.

A Chriſtian muſt denie himſelfe and forſake this wicked world; it is a hard peece of worke, and a matter of no ſmall difficulty thus to doe, and ſuch, as none hath any hart or ſtomack to perform, ſaue but thoſe that are borne anew: yet euery one muſt enforce himſelfe vnto it; and ſo doing wee haue the ſame as a ſure argument of hearty and ſound repentance.

True valour in deſpiſing dangers is onely to be found in the childe of God,

whoſe faith overcommeth all difficulties, and the tediousneſſe of this world.

vnder the very apple-tree I awaken thee) For faith as it hath winges to flie vp to heauen, to the very ſeate of glory, and there to apprehend Chriſt, ſit-
ting

ting at the right hand of his father: so in his humility here it beholdeth that excellency which the world is not able to conceiue.

Where thy mother was in labour of thee.) Christ vouchsafeth to account himselfe as one of vs: a childe of our mother, that is to say, one of the Church; being the head of it and wee his members.

O set me) The faith, zeale, and repentance of Gods children, though it merit nothing at the hands of God, yet giueth vs assurance of obtaining good things, and maketh vs with boldnesse to craue fauour, and a blessing againe. To loue vs as wee loue him. So our Sauour hath taught vs to pray, *Forgiue vs our trespasses as we forgiue &c.* VER. 10.

True repentance maketh vs more zealous, and more to loue Christ then we did before.

A Christian about all things in the world desireth to be ioyned to Christ as neerely, and by as straight a bond and coniunction as may bee.

as a seale on thine heart,) God hath vs alwaies as a seale vpon his heart, and in his minde; how is it possible he should forget vs?

as a seale on thine arme,) Hee hath vs alwaies as a seale vpon his arme, Who can pull vs from him?

Being vpon his arme wee are continually in his sight, his eies are vpon vs alwaies, and his prouidence watcheth ouer vs where soeuer wee doe become, what euill can betide vs?

Loue, zeale &c.) Zeale is the proper vertue of a
R Christian,

Christian, wherein hee can neuer satisfie his owne soule.

strong as death &c.) True zeale breaketh through all difficulties, as death, and as the grane that subdue all, and cannot themselves bee overcome.

a fire of the flame of Iah.) It is kindled in vs by the Spirit of God, and is the peculiar worke of his grace.

VERS. 11 *Much waters cannot quench &c.*) A Christian is endued of God with the gift of constancy and perseverance.

Many temptations assault a christian man to shake his faith; pleasures, afflictions, promises, hopes, rewards: but hee remaineth unmoued in them all.

If a man would give all the substance of his house,) Wicked men spare no cost to draw men from Christ: how much lesse should wee be sparing, or thinke any thing too deare, to stirre vp men to loue him?

Wee are to take most heede of those that come with fairest shewes and pretences to vs: for vnder the sweetest flowers lie commonly hidde the most venomous serpents:

is should utterly bee condemned.) A man must learn to despise the wicked, notwithstanding all their wealth. This among other is one note of him that here shall sojourne in Gods tabernacle, and hereafter dwell in his holy hill. *Psal. 15.*

CHAP:

CHAP VIII.

VARS. I *We haue a sister, &c. and what shall wee doe to our sister &c.)*



He loue of God towards vs, his mercy in hiding and couering our offences, should make vs to loue not on-ly him againe, but our bretheren for his sake: and by all meanes to seeke their good.

The Church of the Iewes so carefull for the calling of the Gentiles, teacheth how earnest wee should bee to commend their conuersion vnto God: whereof wee haue heere a promise, and all the Prophets & Apostles so gloriously doe speak, *Esay, Chap. 4. & 26. &c. Dan. 12. Ezech. 37. &c. Hosb. 3. & 13. Zach. 12. &c. Paul Rom. 11. and 2. Cor. 3. Iohn in the Revelation Chap. 20, &c. and our Sauour, Mathew 24.*

a little one, and she hath no breasts,) The Church of God before the coming of Christ, was shut vp within narrowe bounds, the Gentiles being then aliens and strangers from the covenant.

in the day, when) God hath the moments of

R 2

time

time & seasons numbred before him, & a certaine day prefixed when he wil accomplish his counsels. *(she shall be talked of.)* Faith onely maketh men famous. The Gentiles before their calling were neuer talked of amongst Gods people: though for learning, arts, valour, they were the men of name in the world, and accounted the worthies of the earth: but it is indeed more honourable to be famous in Gods Church, then to have al the fame and estimation in the world beside.

True fame is in piety, and the feare of God only.

Men must beate their heads and cast about how to performe the worke of God in the best manner.

Gods children must bend their speeches to extoll and set forth those that truely feare God, and to make them famous, to honour and prefer them before worldlings, howsoever they glitter and shine in the eies of men. So did *Elisha* set light by the King of *Isracc*, notwithstanding all his greatnesse, in comparison of the good and godly King *Iehoshaphat*, 2. King. 3. *What have I to doe with thee? Get thee to the Prophets of thy Father &c.* Againce, *As Iehouah of hosts liueth, in whose sight I stand, if it were not that I regard the presence of the King of Iuda, I would not haue looked towards thee, nor haue seen thee.*

VERS. 2.

When a wall is to be built, when a gate is to be fenced.) Wisdome is required in the builders of Gods house, to frame euery thing for the greatest bewty and ornament vnto it.

of silver, board of Cedre.) But all for any substance of religion, or necessarie part of Gods seruice,

uice, must be according to the rule of the Word, that it may be as silver, and as the choice Cedre, precious in his sight: *See thou make all things according to the paterne was shewed thee in the Mount.* Exodus 25.40.

A pallace,) The Church of God is the Pallace of the great King, There he doth dwell, and hath his residence and abode for ever. *Psalm. 132. 13, 14*

a wall, a gate,) The discipline of the Church is as a wall and a gate, to keepe that no vncleane person or execrable, enter in, to hold in those that are entered, the free burgessees and Citisens of that Citie.

I being as a wall, and my breasts as towers,) There is VERS. 3. in the Church a communion of Saints, whereby the graces of God bestowed vpon one member, turne to the generall good of the whole body.

then shall I be) Thereof it is that a true Christian is so farre from enuying the blessings of God in other, that he reioyceeth in them as in his owne happinesse and perfection.

as one that findeth peace,) When the heart of the Jewes shall turne vnto the Lord, in the generall call of that whole nation, then come the daies of peace, ioy, happinesse, and comfort, as much as can be vpon earth, through the bright beames of the glorious Gospell, shining most cleere.

Solomon had a vine-yard,) Christianity and pro- VERS. 4. uidence in worldly matters stand well together.

in a fruitfull place,) It is a good duty of a Christian to forecast to haue things most beneficiall and comodious for him. His vines in fruitful places &c.

he hired out his winery ards to keepers.) And when hee is so fitted, well to occupie and manure them to his most aduantage: That which hee cannot keepe in his owne hands, yet to prouide it be so let out as may be for his profit.

euery one bringeth for the fruit of it a thousand peeces of silver.) It is not onely the rule of charity, but true christianity to consider in reasonable sort, of those that trauaile for vs, that they labour not, nor sweate for nothing: but taking part of that gaine which commeth by their seruice, it may giue them cause to blesse vs.

We may with good conscience obserue a due proportion, and are not to be blamed though the best morsels fall into our owne mouth. *Solomon* may well purse a thousand shekels, and leaue two hundred only to come to his lessees share.

The Anabaptistical communion hereby falleth to the ground.

VERS. 5.

My vineyard is still before my face,) God is ialous of his Church, and letteth it not forth to others, but himselfe taketh the care of it; for though it be said in the parable, that a man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husband men &c. that is an other kinde of letting, then that which *Solomon* heere speaketh of: For by it is meant the ministers whom God raiseth vp from time to time for the good of his people, & commendeth them to their care. Among whom hee himselfe is, not idle, but walking in the midst of those golden candle-sticks, and euermore present by the assistance of
of

his Spirit : so as all commeth from his vertue and power, and he doth not rule his Church by deputies or farmours.

I reccine both these 1000 of shine, O Solomon, and also the 200 pieces of those that keepe the fruste of it.) Nothing for substance of religion must bee done in the house of God but by his owne expresse pleasure : all is his, not the least farthing or dodkin in this kinde is to goe an other way.

O thou (see) Christ giueth to his Church Pastours and Teachers as it were Husband-men to dresse his Vine. V^{ERS.} 9.

That settest) Himselfe being the Arch-shepherd that taketh care of all the Vines : euey such Minister hath a chair which ought to be the chaire of truth : for so our Sauour reasoneth, *In the chaire of Moses sit the Scribes and Pharisees ; therefore whatsoever they teach,* (according to the law and doctrine of *Moses*, which onely is to found in that chaire) *do &c.*

To these God himselfe reacheth a cushion, and placeth them in the chaire of authoritie in his Church : as the Scribes and Pharises are sayd to sit in *Moses* chaire, and *Paul* that he *sate* at *Corinth* a yeere and sixe moneths and taught the word of God among them. *Acts* 18. 11. So Ministers haue their *Seas* by Gods owne appointment.

This ordinance of God is perpetuall to the worlds end;

And they must sit, that is with all diligence and faithfulness attend vnto the flocke whereof the

the holy Ghost maketh them over-seers; *(in these Gardaines,)* Every particular congregation is a severall gardaine of the Lords; *(to the fellowes)* Wherein the Ministers are not to dominier over Gods heritage, but to live as examples to the flocke, who are their brethren and fellowes.

Which) Wee must not give that which is holy to dogges, nor cast out pearles before swine. *Matth* the seaventh, and the sixt. The precious treasure of the Gospell is not to be communicated to all, but to those that have eares boared through of God, and hearts to receiue it: as for other, wee are commaunded to shake off the dust of our feete against them.

Attend thy voice) Wee must heare the Ministers of God, teaching vs in his waies: and not heare onely, but heare with diligence and continually attend vpon their doctrine.

And that is one of the markes of the childe of God so to attend on the word.

Preach) Feeding of the flocke is a speciall argument of the loue that a Minister beareth to Christ: *Peter louest thou me? feede my Lambes;* it is the dutie that God calleth and crieth vnto vs for: an intollerable coldenesse and lacke of loue to Christ, to leaue them at lye and seauen.

Job. 21. 15. Preaching is the ordinarie meanes of bringing men to Christ; *faith commeth by hearing.*

Rom. 10. 17.

The thing preached must be Christ, the whole substance of the Gospell, and in whom all the pro-

CHAP. 8. *Solomons Song.*

the promises of God are *Yea* and *Amen*.

Flee to vs, &c. and bee like the Roe, &c.
O thou that dwellest in the Mountaines of spices.) VER. 7.

The Minister that wil approue himselfe faithfull must neuer be wearie of feeding his flock to the comming of Iesus Christ.

And heerein it is his duetie carefully and diligently to implore Gods assistance, that he may goe through with it, and for a blessing vpon his labours.

This meditation both of Christs presence and assistance, of his bright and last appearance, and of the waight of glorie laide vp in heauen, where Christ now is, and where we shall be together with him, must bee alwayes before their eyes as effectuell arguments to stirre them vp vnto this duetie: which they are to oppose and set against all the tediousnesse and difficulties of their function on the one side, and all the glittering pompe of the world on the other.

It is a speciall note of the childe of God to desire still the comming of Christ.

And to meditate on the glory of Gods kingdome.

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